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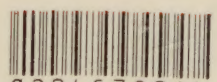
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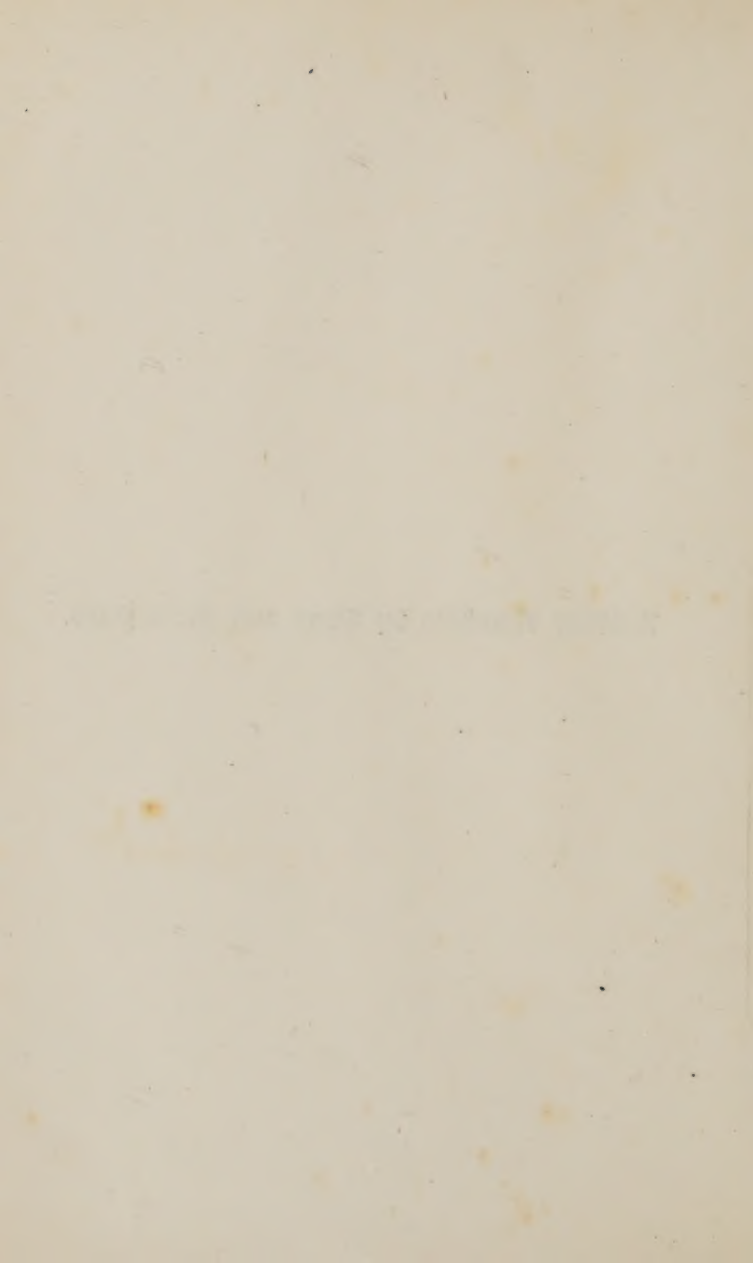


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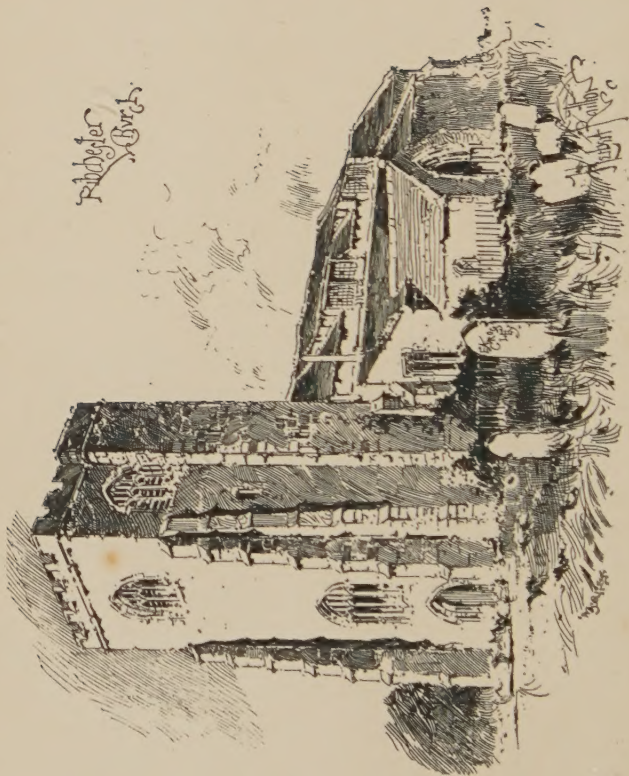


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Holiday Rambles by Road and Field Path.



Rudolph
Burr



HOLIDAY RAMBLES

BY

ROAD AND FIELD PATH:

PRINCIPALLY

NEAR THE RIVER RIBBLE.

With Illustrations by Herbert Railton.

By W. H. Burnett, ✓

AUTHOR OF

“Old Cleveland,” “Guide to Redcar and Saltburn,” “Broad
Yorkshire,” “Sunlight in the Slums,” etc.



BLACKBURN :

PRINTED AT THE “EXPRESS” OFFICE, CHURCH STREET.

MANCHESTER :

JOHN HEYWOOD, DEANS GATE AND RIDGEFIELD.

TO BE HAD OF ALL BOOKSELLERS.

1889.

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EDITOR OF THE *BLACKBURN STANDARD*,
By the Author.

Preface.

HESE sketches originally appeared in the *Blackburn Standard*. Upon this journal being purchased by the proprietors of the *Evening Express*, they were continued in the *Weekly Standard and Express* by the kind permission of Mr. W. A. Abram, the editor. They were received with a considerable amount of favour by the reading public. Mr. Herbert Railton having had his attention directed to them, kindly volunteered, as "a labour of love," to execute some drawings of scenes in his native district which had been dear to him since the days of his boyhood, and this it was which induced the writer to give his sketches this permanent form. They are printed exactly as they appeared in the newspapers, as in this way they best preserve their chatty and discursive character. It is hoped they will lend interest and zest to rambles in the neighbourhoods of which they treat. Should they meet with success in a pecuniary point of view, the writer may be induced to continue in the same paths.


Blackburn, January, 1889.

HOLIDAY RAMBLES

BY

Road and Field Path.

I.—INTRODUCTION.—THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SOUND MIND IN THE SOUND BODY.

HESE papers will be written mainly for the benefit of that increasing class of people who have not a week or a day—but perhaps only a few hours in each week—to spare for a stroll out into the country, and who feel a pleasure and delight in making themselves acquainted with old world spots, with the simple delights of country life, with natural scenes and objects, with old world manners and customs, and with the storied records of the past, whether in ancient legend or in quaint old books. An endeavour will also be made to so pourtray the charms and delights of Nature that some who have hitherto been indifferent to her graces and felicities may be induced to forego indolent sloth and carelessness, and to

woo her in her own retreats. Our ordinary business habits are an irksome monotony, and in many cases unfit us for the pleasures and intercourse of rural life. How few of us see nature with the eye of a Bloomfield, a Burns, or a Billington? For the most part, is it not true, we live dull mechanic lives? The merchant goes daily to his counting house, the tradesman to his shop, the lawyer to his office, with all the punctuality and regularity of wound-up automata. The business life is mainly the life of the machine, in which all the cogs must rhythmically and mathematically, hour by hour, as the thing goes round, fit into each other, or there is a smash. And so to the best of us—those of us who have the most mettle in us, and really love work from a sense of duty and the pleasure that it brings when well and faithfully done—even to us the thing becomes a painful monotony, and we long to be free, if only for a little while, from its restraints, so that we may realise in circumstances less cribbed, cabined, and confined, that after all we have some amount of personal liberty, that life is not one huge tread mill, and that at times we can escape from harassing toil and the sense of an imminent duty immediately to be done, every moment of the wakeful day, and which undone will entail loss and injury in its train.

And how do we seek our relaxations? That is as important a question as How do we do our work? Modern civilization is running up a big debtor account in Nature's book. If we work under unnatural conditions and restraints, how do we spend our brief leisure, which should be our

recreative play time? Now come and think with me awhile, and let us consider how irrational we are in our play as well as in our work. The fact is we take our recreations even seriously: we make a toil of our pleasures. Perhaps you, reader, who are following these disjointed observations with what intentness of mental application you are capable, and really mean, so far as you know, to gain pleasure and profit from them—perhaps you, I say, are a great sinner yourself in the way in which you spend your leisure time. Perhaps you are a young lady in an establishment—I dare not say “girl” or “shop,” for if I did I should be assumed to be taking liberties with you, for we are all, gentle and simple alike, placed on fashionable pedestals now-a-days—or it may be that you are a weaveress in one of those steamed sheds in which you note the presence of a perpetual moisture that is not supplied by the dews of heaven, but by the sprayey exudation of the steam pipes, and what may, I ask you, is your pursuit when the day’s work is done? Do you hasten home to a hurried tea, and prepare, by the little time you bestow upon the meal, for a future dyspeptic condition of the body. Do you hurry over it, as though eating and drinking were a waste of time, when you want to spend the rest of the evening in tracking to the end the hero and heroine of some penny dreadful? Or do you exchange the moist atmosphere of the factory for the close atmosphere of the music hall or the theatre, where perhaps you hysterically expend your sympathies over the creatures of fiction and of art, that die before your eyes to revive the

following night, or that live long nights of drawn-out agonies (before the footlights) which, the moment the curtain is drawn, resolve themselves into the veriest farces of unreality, for the creators of these highly-wrought sensations usually quench their emotions by a glass of much appreciated "bitter" at the nearest bar, or, if the time will allow, a nip of two-penny in the presence of the presiding deity at the altar of Messrs. Spiers and Pond, generally to be found conveniently situated in the temple of Thespis itself. Do you thus spend your leisure time : is your daily life a mixture of toil and frivolities, a sandwich of labour, and whimper, and giggle ?

Do you indeed ever think of that most precious possession—your physical health ? Or is Burns' apostrophe applicable to you ?

O youth, whilst in thy early years
How prodigal of time,
Mispending all thy precious health,
Thy glorious youthful prime.

Well, I dare say in a very large degree it is, and there is no reason why I should seek to scold you, for it is applicable to most of us. The most precious thing we can possess is robust health, and yet how seldom we give the matter a thought—until our system suffers from the inroads of disease, almost beyond repair. Philosophers and reputed wise people are often bigger fools in this particular than your ordinary day labourer, so there is no reason why I should scold shop and mill girls. The doctors tell us that with ordinary care we should all of us live to a hundred years of age, and before we

departed hence to the undiscovered bourne, we should thus see our arm-chairs surrounded by our children and our children's children. We are wound up for that length of time, and we should not run down before its expiry if we were in a true sense wise, and knew how, for our profit and welfare, to "redeem the time."

The age is so mentally active that we do not sufficiently value physical stamina. It was a well-known saying of the ancients, *mens sana in corpore sano*, which I translate for the unlearned reader as "the sound mind in the sound body." God forbid that I should deery books, or study, or the love of art, but all these things are as naught compared with a healthy frame and a sound constitution. And highly as I would appraise the study of any worthy subject in literature or science, the study of health in a true scheme of life should ever occupy the foremost place. Without health, life loses all its enjoyment, as we have recently seen in the case of the poor Emperor Frederick in his palace, bankrupt of nothing but that very boon without which all the shows of life, and even the pomp and splendour of Courts, are the emptiest and hollowest of vanities.

And so the gospel of these later times might well be "consider the liver how it fares," and in our excursions into the country we should seek to discover not only the beauty and glory that lies about us in the lilies and the grass, but we should also seek to realise the genial influence of a natural exercise on our physical condition, and that pure exaltation that comes, not from the cup that cheers, but from the free

inhaling of the ozone-laden breezes of the valleys and the hills.

Now Blackburn is everywhere encompassed by mountains, in the midst of which are pleasant valleys and laughing streams. The town may be grim and repellant in its mantle of cloud and smoke. The din of the factories too may be deadening and deafening. The eye may also be wearied by the continuous prospect of rectangular streets, and of straight shafts, with grimy tipped summits, soaring into a burnt-umber sky. The little dwelling may be cramped and like a cage in its limited space, but the door is always open, and the green fields are very near, and in them the throstle whistles, and the larks soar, and there the space is boundless and the air is pure. How readily we can swarm outwards if we but wish, and find in a change of scene at once rest, recreation, health, and that sense of amplitude and freedom which we can never realise in the confined *cul de sacs* and gulleys—for our best streets are little better—of the town.

Now to neglect to take incursions into the country is to act with the unwisdom of the prisoner who when his prison door was opened would not avail himself of the freedom and the liberty that was offered to him. If those papers which I am now writing do not stir my readers up to eschew slothful habits and to seek more after out-door recreation, I might as well sling ink to some other purpose and on some other theme.

Nature, my friend, is a big theatre, in which the scenes though always set are ever changing. The great hills are the proscenium, and the blue skies, white in places with the cumulus and the scirrus cloud, are the flies and the drop

scenes. The drama that is always being enacted is the old drama of life and death that is fought out annually between the forces of winter and of summer. In November the wind moans in the bare-limbed trees, because winter is stealing on and will soon effect his purpose, and will cruelly slay the vernal growth of the year. In the Spring-time the voice of joy is everywhere heard: the "floods clap their hands" and "the hills" are "joyful together," for life hath triumphed over death, and the eternity of the resurrection is assured. In summer we have the comedy and carnival of the flowers; the mating of the chaste and innocent birds; the wondrous sunrises and sunsets—the transformation scenes in Nature's pantomime, if you will—and surely if we had but eyes to see it we should revel in these changing personations as much for the pleasure and delight, as for the sense of renewing life that is their universal accompaniment. There is not a painter living from Burne-Jones to Holman-Hunt, and from Millais to Whistler, who would not give all he possesses of this world's wealth if he could faithfully reproduce on canvas the glory and beauty of one ruddy and golden summer sunset. Rich men would pay untold thousands for such a picture, and yet we hide the original away behind the dingy screens of brick and stone of our large towns, just as the theatrical artist puts away an obsolete scene in the dock of his mimetic theatre.

But, "To work!" for one might write for ever on these inexhaustible themes, and it is not speculation that is in my eye, Horatio, so much as a definite purpose. In the absence of


a trap—for, alas ! we are not the of social order of gigmanity—or of a cycle, for we could never endure those neck-breaking machines, let us jog along in company, and in spirit, arm in arm together, for half-a-day's outing to Dinckley Dell. It is a hot summer day, and Sol is blazing away overhead as though his stoking arrangements were not neglected. Under foot it is dry and dusty, and we cannot put our foot down without raising a little cloud. It is as well not to be too regardful of appearances, so, comrade, to speak approved Walt Whitmanese, double up your trousers, take a decent gingham as a sunshade and "a cooler," and step out with some resolution, though not with too much speed, for in the pursuit of health as in all other matters, discretion is the better part of valour, and it is not the way we travel but the pace that kills.



II.—A WALK TO DINCKLEY DELL.

To Wilpshire 3 miles—Footpath to Tanners' Arms, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles—Tanners' Arms to Dinckley Hall, 1 mile.—Dinckley Hall to Dinckley Dell, 1 mile—Dinckley Dell to Langho Station, 2 miles—By rail to Blackburn, 5 miles—Total, $14\frac{1}{2}$ miles.—Alternate route from Dinckley Old Hall to Hurst Green, 1 mile—Hurst Green to Dinckley Ferry, 1 mile—Dinckley Ferry to Tanners' Arms, 1 mile—Tanners' Arms to Wilpshire, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles—Train or road to Blackburn, 3 miles.

OUR TRAMP MUST BE GREGARIOUS.—*En Route*.—CHARON AND A LESSON IN ORTHOGRAPHY.—LANCASHIRE LABS AND LASSES HOLIDAY MAKING.—DINCKLEY HALL FARE.—THE USE OF PAROCHIAL HISTORIES.—A PLEA FOR DISCURSIVENESS.—BLUSH ROSES.—A PARSON OF OLD TIME.—THE EPIC OF THE HAWK.—ANCIENT DINCKLEY.—HUGH DE CLYDERHOW HAS HIS USES.

N indispensable necessary to me in a country walk is at least one boon companion of some degree of social and literary habit, not a book worm, not a *bon vivant*; but a corresponding spirit, one who will hold me up on the way by some commerce of thought, and, if necessary, is not above making some natural observation in the botanic, theologic, or antiquarian departments of study; who can make a joke with-

out a drag harrow effort, and who, once in a while—but not too often—will so condescend to men of mean estate as to make a pun, the more rheumatic and broken-kneed, the better. If my travelling companion have a pencil to boot, and a keen eye for the old and crusty in architecture, then we are hail fellow well met. Should he pull me up on the crown of some hill, and begin to gush on the beauty of the surrounding scenery, he is just my man.

I love not men the less but nature more,
For these our interviews, in which I steal
Glimpses of all I may be or have been before,
To dwell within the universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

I plead guilty to the sentiment of the inability of expression, for in the presence of Nature in her grandest moods, what are our thin piping words, and how can they image forth the mystery and the majesty that has brooded over the earth from creation's dawn until now—sunshine and shower, light and gloom—making our valleys blossom in beauty as the Paradise of old?

In my first ramble I was fortunate enough to have just such a companion. We were harmonious as one note in music, which, duplicated, still retains its unisonic sound. *Imprimus* we were both agreed that for Shank's pony a foot-road was best. So we climbed over Revidge through the Park, and struck into a field-path, which enters by a house gable just a few yards down Mellor Road. By this we easily crossed over to Pleckgate in the hollow. From thence we

went by the highway to Wilpshire, passing again into the fields at Wilpshire "town-end" by a footpath which leads across the tunnel, and by the side of the railway, to a ruined home-stead in a green lane. Here we re-crossed the line, and entered another "green lane," and by this gained access to a third field-path, which led us straight across country to the Tanner's Arms, on Ribchester main road. Thence our course was pretty direct to Dinckley, but for the adventures that befell us *en route*, and for the "observations," not auricular but optical, which we chose to make by the way. For the most of the journey we had quite a bevy of factory girls in front, who amused us by their affectation of prudishness or the reverse, when they came to a more or less impossible stile, or there was a brook to cross either by narrow bridge or carelessly laid stepping-stones. They did not forget to remind us by their peals of hearty laughter that they were thoroughly enjoying themselves, and when we got to Dinckley Dell and found that off and on there were over 200 of them merrily passing the time in the woods and by the river margin, we were a kind of inclined to be grateful that, at least, there was one place free from the malific influence of factory toil to which our budding damsels could resort, and, in all the free *abandon* of rustic life, inhale the pure air, and enjoy themselves in those amusements and that intercourse so dear to young and ardent spirits. We can vouch for it that on that day the Ribble side rang with many peals of laughter. Grim old Charon in his boat heard them, and, for once in a while relaxed and smoothened out his old-time wrinkles in a genial

grin, for "business was brisk," and, what was more, the fares were lively, and each countenance looked as though it had borrowed new radiance from the few hours' basking in the summer sun.

Dinckley is not a historic spot, in the sense that it is haunted by any great historic memories. Doubtless, the ferry has been there from time immemorial, longer than the oaks and beeches that now skirt the river banks. Kindly old Charon, Thomas Hardiker, name strangely suggestive of the Viking times, is but ferryman in a succession probably more ancient than that named apostolic by which the good vicar of the neighbouring parish holds his title. But in the ancient times it was not boats but trows, or troughs, as Thomas condescendingly tells us, that were used to get passengers across the river. These trows are adequately described in the local handbooks. They were two hollow troughs joined together, and drawn backwards and forwards across the stream by ropes. Of course, they were good enough for early Britons, and early Saxons and Danes, and even early Normans, but Thomas's boat is Preston built, properly caulked, and, as you pleasantly glide across the stream in her taut stern, you feel a kind of pitiable contempt for your aboriginal kinsmen who were dragged across in pig trows, or troughs, by ropes, and never heard the pleasant pull and the playful ripple—the aqueous music peculiar to the oar.

Thomas told us all about the trows. It is stock history with him. "How do you spell trow?" I asked, whereupon my travelling companion, with phonetic tendencies, came to

Thomas's rescue. It was spelt t-r-o-w, trow, or t-r-o-u-g-h, trow; whereupon some little maidens in the body of the boat, who were crossing with us, tittered and laughed (as well they might) at the ignorance of spelling manifested by my friend, as though one word could be spelt in two ways. These little girls had evidently passed the 4th Standard. To increase their mirth I asked them how they spelt dow, d-o-u-g-h; and plow, p-l-o-u-g-h; and cow, c-o-u-g-h; and row, r-o-u-g-h; but here they stopped me, and assured me that I was decidedly in error. And oh, the wicked twinkle in their merry little eyes, when I told them they were mistaken; it was not I, but the spelling book that was wrong. They looked at each other aside, and their eyes as much as said that it was very absurd to imagine that anything in their orthodox school standards should be at fault. How admirable, from the literary point of view, is this truly English reverence for printed words. It is the printer and the writer that are, now-a-days, "your riverence." and *cum privilegio*, though no *Index* has sanctioned their inspired utterances, and no Pope, Cardinal, or Bishop has laid hand on their untoursured heads. Your Bishops and Cardinals, with the majority of mankind, are far less infallible than Mavor's Spelling Book, or Hornsey's Pronouncing Expositor.

Dinckley Hall was a pleasant residence in the olden time, and from what remains of it, we may see that it has departed and declined from its former grandeur. The most interesting remnant of it, the finely timbered gable in the principal front,

has, I believe, been sketched by Charles Haworth and Herbert Railton, the former artist having also "fixed" in indelible oils the charming stone stairway which leads down from the river bank to the ferry. The hall was doubtless the scene of many revels in the days when England was called "merrie;" and when every Englishman, according to the artists, had a round ruddy face, and a spherul abdomeñ. It is still a house of refreshment, a victuallers' hotel not needing a licence. Between it and the river there is a fine open level space for games on the green sward. Swings are erected there, and there is even a donkey provided to carry the children about. There were many dancing parties on the green on the day of our visit, so that the English youth—the young men and maidens—like Miriam and her company, do not forget the pleasing rhythm of motion which marks the hey-day in the blood. Then there is a clean-swept barn kept for convenience of shelter and entertainment should the day be wet; and here again the dancers were busy footing it on the light fantastic toe. Luckily there is no commandment against honest envy. An owner of mills and factories and of countless scrip, but with gouty extremities, might well envy the free gaiety and brightness, the freedom and power of supple joint and lissom limb, enjoyed and revelled in by these Lancashire lads and lasses out for a holiday.

But if the scene outside the Hall was a busy poly-coloured one—for our holiday-makers, like those in the Gipsying song, were dressed all in their best—there was quite as much to do inside the fabric. Where Tudor squires and ladies had sat

down to sumptuous feasts of boar and venison, washed down with nut-brown ale, modern cotton operatives—the bees in the Lancashire hives—were feasting on tea from fair Cathay and prime Yorkshire ham, grown in the prairies of far-away Illinois, and on eggs that were probably of home manufacture if one might judge from the cackling of the numerous hens prowling about, and determined to let everybody know they were there, and that the eggs were their very own products and not a make-believe of the landlord's. Thomas Knowles is now the tenant, lessee, or occupant of Dinckley Hall, and I can vouch for the good fare, and kindly attendance, which he and his family and retainers provide. His good people fit the old hall and its epicurean memories; they inherit its epigrastic traditions, and they provide good and sufficient fare for man and beast—for the stabling accommodation is ample—in a hearty, unassuming, kindly, homely way, and they don't over-do you with the expense; whilst their one concern seems to be to make you at home, and to see that your comfort and convenience in any particular is not neglected.

It is perhaps fitting here that I should give you some evidence of historic research, and that having put so much light "patter" in this article and the preceding one, I should now weight my sketch with a certain amount of historic and learned jargon. The mental stomach of the public is not satisfied unless you become profound. Historians are always profound; they have a hankering for the lower deep behind the lowest deep. They want to get lower down in the stream

of time than any human plummet has yet sounded. If they flounder and have the temerity to go into very deep waters without having on the necessary diving apparatus, it is all right. Just as there is one step from the sublime to the ridiculous, so there is but the shortest interval between the profound and the dazed. Only in crossing the poetic frontier, any tyro can twig the reversed situations. In the historic somersault the vaulting is not so evident. You are carried forward, as it were, by a slur in music, and there are thousands of people who will consider that when you have absolutely lost yourself you are on the safest *terra firma*, and are proving yourself as great an oracle of wisdom as the "vocal lips of Memnon's shrine." *Vous comprenez ?*

Let me venture, premising for the reader's benefit that I never seek to invent history, and that I have a positive aversion for those heavily-written indigestible tomes like Acts of Parliament—Blue Books in truest reality, that is, blue books that are not so blue in themselves as they make you to be blue—parochial histories. I grant you that it is necessary they should be written and compiled. I grant you that they are capital quarries for harum-scarum literary characters like myself, who go beggar-like about the world, quite careless about scholarly and intellectual appearances. Just as we hew building stone from primary rocks, seamed and eaten by fire, so we drag out from the pages of these lively books, put together with how much labour and with what pains?—history in segments, and we dress it up, chisel away the irregular angles, put on pleasing facets, and

there you are face to face with a striking instance of the deformed transformed. Useful ! certainly they are useful. Why, sir, we grow our potatoes in the soil provided by the *débris* of the ancient rocks—the foundations laid down when this planet had neither sea nor shore, but was everywhere arid and ashy—in fact, just like these shelveable books I am speaking of, always seen in men's libraries, but hardly ever in their hands.

At this rate we shall get to Dinckley Dell somewhere about the Greek Kalends, but I promise the reader faithfully that he shall have an ample bill of fare and all the facts of the history in my next, served up with such mint-sauce as I may be able to command.

I was pretty frank and unreserved in relating our experiences and in stating our opinions—those of my *compagnon, ami de mon esprit*, and of myself—in my relations last week. May I presume to continue to speak to the reader as a man face to face, and not as a social unit at a distance, in my future rambling reveries ? Shall we not all gain by a true commerce of mind ? a free trade in thought ?

For as in a field path you proceed more or less directly to the objective point you have in view, so in these jottings I will strive to keep the end always in sight. But in cases, as the field path does not proceed direct but diagonally, or it may be in a series of spirals, as “Monsieur Corkscrew worming through a cork,” or round sharp corners, as if to surprise you with some sudden freak, or across prattling

brooks by very risky stepping-stones or bridges that are truly rustic ; or through meadows, or pastures, or primeval woods, now in gloom and shadow and now in summer light and gladness—so let me meander on my course, as garrulously as a mountain stream, and as light of heart as a gipsy vagrant, who is popularly supposed to have no other pursuit than to drive dull care away.

For what is the worth of holiday papers unless they are written in a holiday spirit ? Do you mean to tell me, gentle reader, that in the month of July, in the closing years of the nineteenth century, it is any man's wish to incur mental dyspepsia by feeding on indigestible mental food that, at best, is only fitted for the stomach of an ostrich, that can digest nails and plum-pudding with equal despatch. What you want is something that you can easily assimilate and make your own, and I, the writer, having every disposition to save you trouble, prepare you the light dish—the dish of choice fruits such as Adam proposed for Raphael in Paradise—granted that I have the wit—so that you, like our first parents, may arise from such banquet as I spread with spirit “airy light, from pure digestion bred.”

On the day of our ramble I have omitted to note that everywhere the haymakers were busy cutting down the “leaves of grass” in meadows encircled not only by thorn hedges, but by fences which were here and there lit up with bramble flowers, or mottled with blush roses. Sweet is the smell of the new-mown hay, and how musically the reaping

machine murmurs along the rigs and furrows a lullaby song, on the death of the grasses and the flowers of the field. And how merrily young men and maidens toil in the broiling heat, until such time as they can quench their hunger and their thirst in the plenteous mid-day meal or the frugal evening repast, after a day well spent, and necessary labour well and faithfully done.

I omitted also to say that we called and rested, *en route*, at the Tanners' Arms, where we had a pleasant half-hour's chat with the good-tempered landlord. We happened to mention Salesbury Church, and the pretty feature it made in the landscape. "Yigh," said one of mine host's customers, "things are different theer neaw, tort' whod they were twenty or thirty year sin." "How is that?" we queried. "Why, in thoose days," he replied, "there wor a drunken payson ut Bonny Inn (the local name for Salesbury). He us't regularly to ged tipsy, an' one neet he fell into a dyke an' cuddn't ged eawt. Sooa he sheawteed eawt 'Poo me eawt! Poo me eawt!' an' a mon passing by looked ut him an' sed, 'Who are ta'?' 'Why,' said he, 'aw'm t' minister o' Bonny Inn.' 'Lay tha still then,' said the man, 'tha arn't wanted till next Sunday,' an soa he went on laughing, an left him wheer he wor."

Whilst we were at the Tanners' Arms the landlord showed us two young hawks which he had caught, and which he was putting through a course of training. One of them—the female—was very tame, and readily perched on his wrist, as the falcon on the arms of lords and ladies in the old hawking days. He had procured the birds from a nest in

the neighbouring wood. The female he thought he should be able to tame, but he was afraid he had hardly got them young enough. The male bird, on the contrary, was very wild and vicious, and he had not much hope of doing any good with it. It had got wayward, he thought, because "at the first he bate it too much." So even hawks do not like "bating," and with the carnivora of the forest force is no remedy, but only that gentle leading and drawing out, to which we have given the name education.

In his kindly desire to show us the influence he had already acquired over his beautiful and brilliant-eyed pets—we have all heard of the eye of the hawk—the landlord set the female bird away out in the open, and it flew across the road and alighted on a neighbouring tree. He called patiently for it to return and take its accustomed place on his wrist, but the bird made no response. Some of the landlord's friends got a ladder and tried to ascend the tree, but the moment they began to shake the boughs the hawk flew away to a much greater distance, and might never have been recaptured but for the eagle eye of the writer, which after others had made a long hue and cry, discovered her sitting on the ridge of a house some two hundred yards distant. The landlord was highly gratified to think that his bird knew a house, and preferred to perch there. He was evidently of opinion that the bird thought the building was "its own home." From this coign of vantage the landlord again tried to coax her, but the bird was too much occupied with the beauty of the surrounding scenery, and with the

little birds that flew over her as she sat there, and upon whose flight she cast many a furtive upturned gaze. Eventually the ladder was brought up, and someone going up it, she was recaptured at the corner of a chimney stack, and safely brought away. The landlord's placid face beamed with delight when he realised that he had again obtained possession of his feathered pet, and I fancy it will be some time before it is again entrusted with its liberty.

The birds were in lovely feather and condition, and were beautifully marked with wave-like markings. I find they were Kestrels, "a species which is distinguished not only by the symmetry of its form and its elegant plumage, but by the gracefulness of its flight, and the manner in which it frequently remains suspended in the air, fixed as it were to one spot by a quivering play of the wings, scarcely perceptible. It is one of our commonest indigenous species, and is widely spread through the kingdom. It preys upon the different species of mice, which it hunts for from the elevated station at which it usually soars, and upon which it pounces with the rapidity of an arrow. The Kestrel is easily reclaimed, and was formerly trained to the pursuit of larks, snipes, and young partridges. It is a species in point of distribution, very widely spread, being found in all parts of Europe and America."

The sight of these birds recalled the time when falconry was universally practised in these islands. The discovery of fire-arms was the main cause of the decline of the sport. Hawking, as a field sport, must always have been an

interesting pastime, and was doubtless largely practised by the lordly residents of the many mansions on either bank of the Ribble. The laws of the game assigned to the different ranks of persons the sort of hawk proper to be used by them, and they are placed in the following order :—The eagle, the vulture, and the merloun, for an emperor. The gyr-falcon, and the tercel of the gyr-falcon, for a king. The falcon-gentle and the tercel-gentle, for a prince. The falcon of the rock, for a duke. The falcon peregrine, for an earl. The bastard, for a baron. The sacre, and the sacret, for a knight. The lanere and the laneret, for an esquire. The marlyon, for a lady. The hobby, for a young man. The goshawk, for a yeoman. The tercel, for a poor man. The sparrow-hawk, for a priest. The musket, for a holy water clerk. The kestrel, for a knave or servant. Those of my readers who wish further to study this interesting subject, I refer to *Strutt's Sports and Pastimes*.

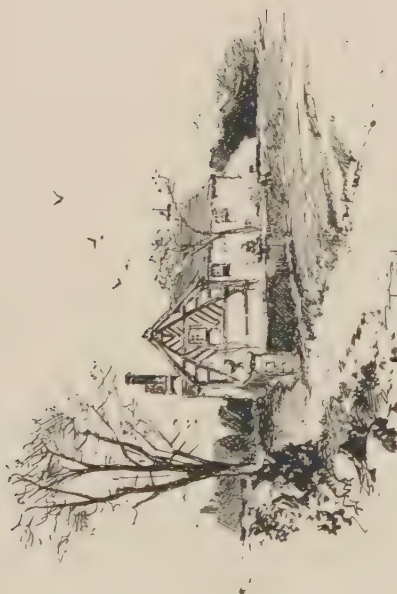
From natural history to antiquarian lore, the transition is not easy. Birds on the wing, and the records of musty tomes, somehow or other do not mix. Luckily Dineckley has not much of a history. Whitaker in his invaluable history does not make much mention of the place, but merely speaks of "Dineckley Hall" lying warm and low, on the margin of the Ribble. "This," he says, "was a property of another branch of the Talbots, and here is still seen a large altar from Ribchester, now much defaced, and the inscription illegible." According to the same authority, in the nineteen townships of which Blackburn was composed, the township on whose

history I have now to treat was included as Wilpshire-cum-Dinckley. This much is recorded in an inquisition taken at Blackburn on the 25th day of June, 1650. By an inquisition held in the fourth year of the reign of King Edward II, Roger de Childerhow held one ox-gang and a third in Dynkerley in thanage. A further entry in the notes to Whitaker's text relates to an *Avicia* f. Ade de Bilyngton, "who, in her widowhood, gave Richard her son Langall in Bilyngton 'incipiendo ad hesiam ad altam *viam*,' following to the land of Adam del Den, along his land to Dynkeldeleghbrok along the brook, 'usque ad clotum molendini, sequendo eundem clotum usque in capito Langall,' so to Langersik, along the sike to the land of Wil. de Menelay, so to the ditch, along the ditch to the highway *usque ad hesiam ubi prius incipimus*." At Lancaster Assizes, so early as July, 1292, Bernard de Hackingge was fined for not prosecuting a writ of escheat against Adam, brother of Swayn de Dynkyddeleghe for a tenement in Dynkyddeleghe. And at the same assizes Hugh de Clyderhowe and others were found to have disseized John F. Elie de Dynkedeleye and others of 20 acres of moor and 10 of wood in Dynkedeleye. Dinckley Hall belonged to Robert Morley in the 20th year of Edward IV., 1481-2, and his descendant died seized of it in the 24th of Henry VIII., 1522-3. In the 9th of Elizabeth the hall was in the possession of Roger Noel, of Read, and afterwards it passed to the family of Talbot, as before recorded. Dorothy, daughter and heiress of John Talbot, of Salesbury, married in the 17th century, Edward Warren, of Poynton, Esq., who resided

here, and, says Whitaker, is justly commended by Dr. Stukeley for his care of the Roman altar, since removed to Stonyhurst.

The woods by the Ribble side in the ancient days were not the mere shreds and patches which we now behold them. They rang in season daily to the sound of the horn, and the quarry was not then the timorous creatures of later days, but the bounding deer and the courageous boar. On the 28th year of the reign of Henry VII., William, Abbot of Whalley, bought the wood on Dineckley Moor, and from certain defined points to the river bank, then to "deid weynstobbe" (dead whinstob), and so from "deid weynstobbe uppe through the wode from oke to oke, as they are markyd." The old monks were careful bookkeepers and excellent bargain makers, and in these respects were quite equal to the cotton lords and accountants of modern times. Fr. Willielmus Dinkley is mentioned in the records as having been a Vicar of Whalley. William, son of Bernard de Dynkedley, granted to the Abbot and Monks of Stanlawe, for 40s. of silver, half an acre of land in Billington, called Heighlock pigkel, lying to the east, "*juxta stratum ferream versus Cliderhow*" (the paved Roman Road) for a barn, at the rent of 6d. of silver to be paid at Easter.

So these are the whole of the historic records of this pleasant villa or hall near the trow-hole of the Ribble. And Dobson, in his carefully compiled hand-book, has little more to add. He describes Dinkley as a very small township—the smallest township in the county—in the parish of Black-



Dinkley Hall
p. 10

burn, containing altogether only 608 statute acres. And the same writer gives some information about the "trows" at the ferry, which I have already alluded to. These, he says, were something like a couple of mangers or cattle troughs fastened together abreast, and propelled across the stream by the trowman by means of a pole, which he struck against the bottom of the river. Halliwell, in his "Archaic Dictionary," he says, gives "trows" as a word current in Northumberland, as a description of a kind of double boat, with an open interval between and closed at the ends; used on the North Tyne for salmon fishing; and "trow" as a word used in Suffolk for trough; indeed, it is the same word as trough; our modern word "trough" being derived from the Anglo-Saxon "trow." It may be worth noting, continues Dobson, that on the further side of the river there is a farm called "Trough House," and on the other one called "Trow's House."

Dobson notices that in Dinckley township there is neither church, chapel, school, parson, priest, schoolmaster, doctor, nor lawyer, and he seems to have a peculiar satisfaction in recording the fact. Probably he is malicious enough to think, like Sir Walter Scott, that the world could get on better without the three professions than with them. The parsons, said the observing Scott, live by our sins, the doctors by our ailments and infirmities, and the lawyers by our lack of honour and our crimes. But about Dinckley men live the Acadian life, and now that the ravenous Norman barons and squires are all gone, surely no note of discord is ever heard

amongst them, save the hooting of the owls by night, and the hoarse croaking of the cornerake by day. At Dinckley men live always in the midst of that temple of Nature about which the Agnostic is so continually prating. They are therefore in the midst of the holy of holies. The incense of bird-song, of murmuring waters, of the fragrance of choice flowers, is continually ascending to the sapphire skies. They should themselves, therefore, ever be in tune with their hearts and minds set and in unison with the natural harmony, but I am afraid, my friend, if we look close to it we shall see that the absence of "the professions" makes but little difference.


The Hugh de Clyderhow was, no doubt, a mighty hunter before the Lord, and a healthily-natured man, but being continually in "the temple," my Atheistic or Agnostic friend, did not prevent him removing his neighbours' landmarks. Besides, do not hawks hover in "the temple's" dome; do not pike lurk in the glassy waters; ready to rend and devour, and, but for man's interposition, the sacred arcana of the woods—which, like the mountains and hills, are the sanctuaries of Nature—would even yet in Merrie England have been over-run with specimens of the genus *felis*, having in their jaws "twelve small and nearly equal incisors, four canines, two of great length; and seven cheek teeth," set there for what think you? Even Hugh de Clyderhow had his use when he went about destroying the remnant kindred of these creatures, and so it may be that, in our modern civilization, the lawyer, the parson, and the medicine man,

are preparing the way for the better systems in the newer times that are to follow. All the eras have had their fore-runners, their John the Baptists, and it does not follow that the latter should all fulfil the same functions, or observe the same moral conditions. All minister, nevertheless, to that perfection of humanity which is yet to come, and which was foretold by seers and sung in story.



DINCKLEY DELL.

II.—THE PELLITORY OF THE WALL.—THE MUSCULAR POWERS OF THE DRAGON FLY.—HURST GREEN AND ITS CHURCH. —DINCKLEY DELL.

OLLOWING my own disjointed, disconnected methods, let me now return, in an involutory fashion, upon myself, and take up the thread of my discourse, as a Methodist preacher would say, by returning to the main track of my journey at the point where I left it in my first chapter. First let me note, however, whilst my companion is taking a sketch of the structure, if Dobson in his handbook has anything more to say concerning the Tudor or Caroline structure situate on the marge of the Trow Hole of the Ribble.

Dobson, on page ninety of his petty itinerary, says the house has in its walls some of the ancient timbers of the old hall, and in the interior are some quaint carvings of the arms of the Warrens, etc., former residents here. The old gateway yet remains, through which the ancient lords of Dinckley have driven to their mansion, and through which, doubtless, many of their tenantry have often gone to partake of their lord's hospitality in those "good old times," when,

whatever their drawbacks and shortcomings, there was abundance of social intercourse between landlord and tenant, between the owner of the soil and those dependent upon him. The present tenant is proud of the antiquarian associations of his habitation, and when I called upon him, says Dobson, he appeared to feel quite an interest in talking of the Warrens and Talbots of old. And Dobson points out that to a botanical friend who accompanied him, there were other objects than the antiquarian about the building which proved of interest, for, looking around, the botanist was not long before he was stooping to examine the Pellitory of the Wall, (*Parietaria officinalis*), a rather rare plant, which he had only met with before in this county at Clitheroe Castle, at Wardless-on-the-Wyre, and at Wraysome Tower, near Cartmel. But when the botanist spied the herb the tenant hardly seemed to relish it, for he remarked, "What! are you one of that lot?" in a fashion indicating that botanists were no particular favourites of his. The botanist meekly replied that he gathered plants sometimes, and it appeared from a subsequent conversation, that on one occasion a botanist from Blackburn, if one of the class of quacking herbalists, says Dobson, is worthy of the name, had been searching in the neighbourhood for plants, and the farmer had shown him the Pellitory of the Wall, which has a high reputation amongst herbalists, old Gerard recounting in his quaint way many of its virtues, one of them being that it "hath force to scoure." He gave him a lot of it, an act of kindness which was rewarded by the fellow coming a few nights after, and taking

all the plants he could find. He had, however, overlooked one root, which still remained to give Dinckley Hall a right to be considered one of the few Lancashire habitats of the plant, a distinction of which the tenant appeared, says the quaint chronicler, to be rather proud.

I quite agree with Dobson when he says that this is a very interesting part of the river, the views both up and down the water being very fine, while over the stream the heights of Aughton are crowned by the turretted home of the Jesuit brotherhood, Stonyhurst College. The river here takes a vast sweep round by Brockall Ees, near which is Braddyll-with-Brockall, the parent house of the ancient family of Braddyll, where they were seated from the reign of Henry II. to the beginning of the last century, when they removed to Conishead Priory, having enlarged their fortunes by an auspicious marriage with the heiress of the Doddings of Conishead.

And so endeth the chronicle of Dobson. Passing over in the Ferry Boat, we had a pleasant chat with the boatman. In answer to our enquiries, he informed us that the Trow Hole—the huge pool over which his boat crosses—had been sounded, and was found to be 36ft. deep. This is a more than sufficient depth of water to float the largest ship in the Queen's Navee. Just above, the stream is very broad and shallow, and comes rippling down at a great rate over small pebbles and boulders. We noticed before stepping into the boat that the geological conformation here is somewhat peculiar. A ridge of shale crosses diagonally over the bed of the stream, and has a very acute dip towards the Trow Hole. It is

probably to this circumstance that the pool is owing, though one would think that the volume of debris and mud brought down by the stream would speedily level such inequalities in the river bed. The schistus stratum, however, may act as a fender, and may collect the loose debris in the stream before it reaches the deep trench. I believe at the other ferries on the Ribble, in consequence of the variations in the river bed, the ferry landing-places have to be continually changed, but at Dinckley the boatmen have observed the same course across the stream from time immemorial.

Ascending the bank on the other side, we are soon face to face with a charming prospect. We pass across a rustic bridge over a stream which should abound in trout, and which reminds us of the brook mentioned in Tennyson's lyric. A swallow darts under the arch of the bridge with a projectile kind of accuracy, as we look over into the stream, whereupon we embark on a conversation as to the peculiarities in the flight of birds and of insects. My companion assures me that the most remarkable of fliers is the dragon fly, and he relates how it can descend at almost lightning speed from a considerable elevation, and pull up within an air-space of its prey with a suddenness which is almost miraculous. I ruminate as to how the feat is accomplished: what must be the muscular force exerted to stop instantly a rifle bullet in full flight: where Mr. Dragon Fly got his patent Westinghouse brake, and how it happens that I, with such observant faculties as I reckon to have, had never noticed this peculiarity in the insect before. Many a time and oft have I watched dragon flies

poising over a pond, and darting after their prey, yet it had never struck me with what a suddenness they can overcome the momentum of their rapid flight, and pull up. Decidedly we live to learn.

Still we ascend. And all the while below us is the mirror of the curving Ribble, with its flowing waters gleaming in the sunlight, and its steep northern banks crowned and bedded with their wealth of upper and underwood—their richest of June foliage. There, beneath the overhanging trees, is Raid Deep, so I am told, glassy and calm, and unperturbed; unaffected by floods, undisturbed by droughts, and always complete and full. I will not try to paint the picture, well worthy as it is of a Ruskinian rhapsody, for all around are swelling hills and green pastures, and the bravery of woods, and past them all the river meanders, giving life to the landscape, and mixing the ever present stillness with a motion almost of life. Even the Garden of Eden was not complete without its flowing streams, for do we not read, “and a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.”

At the village of Hurst Green we ordered refreshment at the principal hotel, and, whilst it was in preparation, we went on a visit of inspection to the well-kept church, and to make a complimentary visit to its worthy vicar, who, against enormous odds, has maintained an outpost of the Church of England in a somewhat alien land. The church of Hurst Green is famous all over England for the orderly reverence of its services, and for the quiet and patient earnestness of its

respected priest and custodian, the Rev. J. Wallace.

I need not dwell upon the beauty of the fabric, for exteriorly it can lay little claim to architectural merit. The interior is beautifully kept. The benches are all open. The chancel especially shows out well, with its properly appointed God's board. Many mottoes and texts remind you that the building is devoted to other than secular uses. Great numbers of people visit the church and its quiet God's acre in the summer, and on this particular day there was quite a crowd in the churchyard noting with interest all that was to be seen there.

I am no iconoclast, and no believer in image-breakers. I would rather be a repairer of the old paths. Now and again earthquakes may be serviceable, and so may revolutions; and those who do not dwell upon the spot where they exert their energies, may safely philosophise upon their place in the scheme of the universe. I am thankful, however, that physically, at any rate, we are little affected by seismic waves. In social matters, too, I prefer a settled government. I cannot see what is the good of having a general upset every now and again, by way of varying the programme, and discovering a fresh *modus vivendi*. Where is the common sense in raving about re-formations and re-revolutions, and re-formers and re-revolutionists? It is but the child's hankering for something new: the green faculties of imagination and wonder discovering in each new pretender a saviour of society, and a new patent illuminant taking pity on the darkness of the Gentiles. Old modes are best, if we only knew it, and

that was a wise saying of Voltaire's, "Whatever *is* may be reasonably accounted for." I am no politician, or I might level all this logic as by a kind of pistol-shot at the head of the Liberation Society, so, therefore, *pace* politics !

Hurst Green is a truly rural village. The church is a conspicuous object for miles round, and crowns a commanding eminence. The vicarage is close by, and you enter the vicarage garden under an ivied gateway, on the inner span of which thoughtful hands have placed an illuminated text. The garden slopes down to a steep precipice over a babbling brook far down below, and chafing noisily in its bed. The vicarage garden, like the church, is well cared for, and weeds, both in parish and pleasure ground, are carefully exterminated. "What are the industries of Hurst Green," I asked, as I stood in this pleasant spot, this acreage of peace far from the madding crowd. "Agriculture, that is all, and bobbin shops." Simple Acadian life, simple Acadian people, thought I, and why should they envy the lotus eaters that can thus dream life away ?

How much there is that is beautiful in the compact life of these village communities, whose daily duties circle round the home, the field, the market, the school, and the church. In Hurst Green may we not picture the scene drawn so beautifully for us in the poem of Evangeline :

Solemnly down the street came the parish priest, and the children
Paused in their play to kiss the hand he extended to bless them.
Reverend walked he among them, and up rose matrons and maidens
Hailing his slow approach with words of affectionate welcome.

Then came the labourers home from the field, and serenely the sun sank.
Down to his rest, and twilight prevailed. Anon from the belfry
Softly the Angelus sounded, and over the roofs of the village
Columns of pale blue smoke, like clouds of incense ascending,
Rose from a hundred hearths, the homes of peace and contentment.
Thus dwelt together in love these simple Acadian farmers,—
Dwelt in the love of God and man. Alike were they free from
Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and envy the vice of Republics.

There are but 29 Church of England families in Hurst Green, nearly all the rest being Roman Catholics. The total Church population cannot, therefore, be more than 200 souls. The congregations, however, are far from poor, as many come from Dutton; and the summer time brings numerous visitors. *Hymns, Ancient and Modern* are in use, and the holydays of the Church are duly observed as set forth in the Church of England Kalendar.

Returning to the hotel, the Sherbourne Arms, Ralph Holden, landlord, we found all ready for our refection. Having made what the Yankees would call a square meal, we set off across the meadows back again to Dinckley. Here my artist friend perfected, to some extent, his sketch of the hall. A walk over the hill to the left brought us to Dinckley Dell, the terminus of our journey, and with a brief account of which my present sketch must come to an end.

Now it is somewhat strange that although everybody talks about going to Dinckley Dell, but very few pleasure seekers find their way thither. They generally go to Dinckley Hall and stop there for the day. The dell takes its name from the brook which has its course in the parish of Langho,

and finds its way into the Ribble between well wooded banks mid-way from the Hacking and Dinckley ferries. It is a charming glen, and well worthy of a visit by those who love quietude, woodland scenery, and brawling brooks. We skirted along it to the west, and gradually made our way back to the Tanners' Arms, and thence across the fields to Wilpshire by the same walk we had taken on our outward journey. We had a most pleasant tramp, which I trust I have described with just sufficient graphic felicity as to induce my readers to accompany us on our next journey.






Whitney Street

A TRAMP ACROSS THE NAB FROM HARWOOD TO WHALLEY.

Blackburn to Great Harwood by rail, $4\frac{3}{4}$ miles—Great Harwood by road to the field-path entering at the stile near the Bridge on Whalley-road, over the Calder, $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles—Field tramp across the Nab to Whalley, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles—Whalley to Blackburn by road or rail, 7 miles.

I.—A “DUSTY” BEGINNING.—HARWOOD MAGNA.—CARLYLE’S BEETLE.—A JUNE REVERIE.—THE GLUTINOUS CALDER.—RURAL SIGHTS AND SOUNDS.—MR. GREG ON HEALTH.—ENGLISH AND IRISH EVICTIONS.—LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE FARMING.—LANCASHIRE WITCHES.

HE day was inviting. It did not rain. The sky was well-nigh cloudless, or what clouds there were merely served as curtains for the great window of heaven, through which the bright eye of the sun looks out, as if it were the burning orb of a deity “with surpassing glory crowned.”

That is not so “dusty” for a beginning, but then the roads were dusty, and the dust, as they say in Yorkshire, “stoured,” that is, blew up like a small simoon whenever

the wind stirred, or rose up in a kind of cloudy insurrection every time you put your foot down on the hot, dry turnpike. It was a day very suitable for a field tramp; indeed, I had specially ordered it for that purpose. On the road things were not wholly pleasant, but in the fields they were divine. The pastures were emerald; and the turf sprang beneath your feet with a far more pleasing elasticity than a double-piled Brussels or Kidderminster. The breeze was just sufficient to make the purple-brown grasses of the meadow nod their heads, and say "how-d'ye-do" as you passed. The woods were vocal with bird songs; and the leaves of the trees whispered to each other in that soft, lazy, drowsy, silken way that made you inclined to play eaves-dropper in their conferences and confidences. What were the wood-leaves saying? Let the reader answer. I will not pretend to say.

Now, as these papers represent to the reader, a more or less jaded Blackburnian, in quest of the ancient, the recreative, the picturesque, and the æsthetic, as they are to be found in old world and truly rustic spots, it must not be imagined that having taken train to that Harwood called "the Great," in contradistinction to that almost wholly absorbed Harwood called "the Little," that I am going to prolong my stay in the new and modern habitat, and conger of stone houses, that looks more or less pleasantly—in one direction—over a landscape marred by the blots and blurs of manufacturing towns. Harwood has a history, I know, and some day it may be my humour to set it forth at length. It has also a very pleasing old Tudor church, with quaint

memories anew, if they were fully set forth, to make a whole volume of themselves ; that I also know. It can boast in addition of its ancient families, with their lengthy lineages duly set forth in chronological order in Parish Histories, but why need I refer to them ? What have ancient families to do with me, or I with them ? My humour just now is to consider no entailings. "Let the dead past bury its dead," or shall I say with Carlyle, who is always less refined and more emphatic than Longfellow, as in the words of his address to the beetle, by way of *lux in tenebris* on the dark subject of long descent :

Also of "ancient family,"
Though small in size, of features dark ;
What Debrett's peer surpasseth thee,
Thine ancestors were in Noah's Ark.

What is the use of any of us reckoning backwards, when even beetles can lay claim to long-past origin and a long line of ancestors ? But, now, when I come to think of it, the day is too hot to speculate.

To-day I am *solus*, and I must occupy myself as I may in my Robinson Crusoeing journey. So I skirt by Great Harwood on the South, and make for the fields by as direct a road as is open to me. When I have reached the outskirts of the town, I ask my way of a lady with a perambulator (why do people always note the perambulator, and not the "immortal soul" within it ?) who advises me "to keep to the right until I come to the second turn to the left." I walk a long way, as I think to the right, until I begin to imagine I am getting

wrong. Luckily I meet an Irishman, who reassures me, and tells me to "turn to the left" at the next corner. At the "next corner" there is an open door, and what looks like a ginger beer shop, but I find on going into the house there is nobody about. As I am hot and thirsty I am partly inclined to help myself, leaving the pay on the table, but upon reflection I consider that discretion is the better part of valour, and accordingly leave the premises, not the worse for liquor but for the want of it. Some distance further on I come to a road side inn; and temptation overcomes me. I order a glass of what the poets call nut brown ale, and it is served to me by none of your light-headed modern barmaids, but by a cheerful old lady—Heaven bless her soul—who might have mixed, judging by her appearance, hot whiskeys for Noah in the ark. Well, we needn't laugh, we shall all be old some day. Even the youngest of us feel it coming on.

Leaving the house, a few paces bring me to the stile, just below the Cock Bridge Inn, which leads across the fields. At first I skirt the margin of the Calder water, but I try not to see the river. I prefer to look at the pasture instead, and the ample expanse of green. The Calder has been a lovely river some day: it is a sewer now. The very rocks in its bed are covered with a mucuous slime. The water is so thick at times that it couldn't make a waterfall, even if opportunity were afforded it. It hangs together like golden syrup before it is refined. I saw a water wagtail hopping about on the stones in the stream, flitting here and there, trying to make believe that things were not so bad as they looked. Probably

it had been born on the banks of the Calder in happier days. It must have been a depraved bird—that is so far as its sense of smell was concerned. A whiff of the Calder was enough for me, without taking a plunge in its odours. And yet what lovely woods there are by the stream, and what pleasant pastures, gradually ascending till you reach the heights over Moreton Hall, where let us pause for a short while, to make a few rural notes as fancy may dictate.

Towns nestle about the base of Pendle as limpets adhere to a rock, or as swallows to the eaves of a building. From time immemorial, around it, and around all great mountain masses, villages and farms have crowded as if for life and warmth. Its sides rain down fatness on the adjoining lands, and deep within its crust there are strata, yielding life-giving streams and mineral wealth. How pleasing are the white farmsteads stippling the landscape; how insignificant are the towns and villages almost buried in the valley rifts, compared with the huge bulk of the soaring purple mass that towers above them. I am in no humour, however, to make landscape contrasts, with a view to historic sequences of a moral order. We all know that Pendle is ancient, and that beside such landmarks man and his art, in the point of endurance, are but as snowflakes in the stream. If Pendle could laugh, how his sides would crack at our pigmy performances, and the houses of cards that we rear in full belief that they are going to last for ever and a day. We prefer other musings, as we sit upon the summit of a pleasant hill, and look adown the vale.

Is it not Thoreau who has shown us, not only in his works, but by his experiences, how that, in the neighbourhood of great cities, you may practically live the life of a recluse, and hide away, as it were, in the sweet quiet and content of nature's bosom? The towns are confined in their dimensions, and the fields and hedgerows, the woods and surrounding hills, soon shut out their harsh and dissonant noises. Just now there is not a living soul in sight of me, and the cattle are so tame that even a virgin calf has straddled up to look me in the face, as I lay down prone upon the grass. If life in our great towns in Lancashire is all hurry-scurry, a hot friction, a restless, never-be-content hunting after wealth, and if we are in face everywhere with a civilisation on stilts; here, a few miles away, is Arcadia, and wood voices, and mountain breezes, and meadow perfumes, just as it was one hundred years ago, when "George III. was king," and indeed, before there were any kings at all. There, below me, is a great green pasture, which I may convert into a horizontal drawing board, and fill with fancy's pictures to my own liking. In the olden times fairies might dance on it, but I don't say that they did. Your ear is offended by no harsh sounds, your eye by no distracting sights. Up, far away above you, the sky is blue as Adam saw it when the earth was sent, newly spinning like a top, through space. The solar fires are just as ardent as those that burst the first flower buds in Eden's yard. The slowly drifting clouds—bearing the burden of Aquarius in their noiseless carriages—sally above, looking out for dry places needing nourishment, and ready to yield,

out of their white store chambers of fleecy vapour, sustenance and life. And what a show of life there is everywhere under the heavens. Can we in any way estimate the vegetable forces that are let loose in spring, and exert themselves in re-creating myriads of new forms in grass and leaf, in bird and flower? The powers of the air, the sunbeam, the rain, and the dew are continually ascending and descending, on a kind of Jacob's ladder of beneficence, between earth and heaven. A bee sails past me, honey-laden, with its drowsy hum. All around in the lush pastures soft-eyed kine peacefully graze. You see little of the presence of man, except in the trimly-ordered vegetation, and the farms which dot the landscape here and there; and which serve as his dormitory overnight and his refectory by day. If he puts himself in evidence, he is swarthy featured and strong limbed; bronzed and hardened by free contact with the sunshine and the storm. The lark rises skyward with many a flutter; and you can follow it no longer, for your weak eyesight, "tendered" by factory steam, cannot bear the strain of too closely exploring the secrets of the "bay of blue," mottled by fleecy islands of white clouds, silvered through and through with a sun-burst of sunny sheen. In a field across the valley a herd of cattle start away in a canter and make for a common centre, with their tails rampant in the air, and full of the riant life of the hour and of the time. The distant mountains are veiled with a gauze-like haze, the exhalation which the sunbeams are wooing from the soil. In the whole landscape there is nothing so distinct to your vision as the shadow—

your own—at your side, and that is a decided silhouette, just as dark as the sun itself is lustrous and blinding. On the far-away roads you hear the trailing crackle of laden wains, cotton laden may be, taking the raw material to some distant mill, where rent and labour being low and cheap, the manufacturer can successfully compete with his brother in the town. Now and again you hear the quicker rattle of the milk cart, like a distant fusillade of irregular musketry. Cocks crow on far-away farms, and you can faintly hear their carolling voices; the bird-songs are hushed in the growing mid-day heat, as though the songsters themselves were indulging in a quiet reverie under unwonted summer skies. In the meadows I hear the mechanic “creek, creek,” of the quail, mysterious bird, so evident to the ear, but so seldom perceived by the eye. There is a little hedge runnel close beside me, and the day being so hot, the cattle make no apologies to me for intruding their presence, and coming so near me to slake their thirst. How the horn teetotaller would envy them that pleasing suction with which they accompany the draught of Nature’s pure nectar. Buttercups, daisies, and the despised marigold (the gold of St. Mary) are all around me, and on distant banks I discover the mauve hyacinth, and whole spaces covered with the gleaming yellow furze, now in full bloom. The cherry flaunts its blossoms in the hedge row, and the crab apple, with its pink and white blooms, scents the air with its sweet faint odours. The chestnut is gaily attired, with its hundreds of pyramids of white flowers, and the holly

even cannot hide away its treasure of starlike clustered bloom. A solitary ousel tunes its song, and suddenly its mate answers from a neighbouring hedgerow. Servants are beating carpets on the pasture of a neighbouring hall, and you can hear the ripple of their laughter across the "hazy distance." What a banquet of rest and refreshment is here for the denizen of the crowded town. One can hardly understand why he should so much prefer his stuffy ceiled room—his stewbox in some narrow street—to this open theatre of joy, and liberty, and uncontaminated air. Why is he so afraid of the breeze; so fearful of the sunshine? Why should he wholly sink himself and his individuality in the vortex of our vexed social life? If his race is to be perpetuated, "Home to his mountains let him return."

One might sit for ever dreaming and brooding in so pleasant a scene as this, but I confess myself to be one of that order who have no great liking for a long reverie even under the most favourable conditions, but prefer to keep moving along with some definite object in view. The late Mr. Greg has laid it down as a physiological law, that if a man cannot sit for a whole day on the banks of a stream doing nothing, and thinking of nothing, but only throwing stones into the water, for the whole of the twenty-four hours, I suppose, he is not in a proper state of health. All I can say in answer to such a doctrine is, that at least one of Her Majesty's liege subjects is at the present moment fit for the hospital or the convalescent home. Then what about the great world of little folks? Who could pay them to discharge such a

function for twenty-four hours? No, Mr. Greg, you must try again. It is necessary to cultivate repose, I know, and especially in these hurry-scurry times, but if you ask me to say who is the most healthy man, my canon of robusticity would lead me at once to decide upon that specimen of the *genus homo* that is most restive and most active. Why, even the poet, with all his contempt for physiologic law, has discerned that it is the "young heart" that is "hot and restless," and the "old, subdued and slow." We will dismiss, therefore, that twenty-four-hours'-sitting-still-stone-throwing theory.

As I pass along I note that, thanks to the wet season, the fields and hedgerows are everywhere very green, and that the ferns are luxurious on the banks and in the woods, and by the side of the burns and streams. There are many ruined cottages—houses once, where children were reared and where fathers and mothers loved, toiled, and struggled—on the wayside, and one cannot but reflect how differently one regards these evidences of rural depopulation in England to what they do in romantic Scotland and imaginative Ireland. It is abundantly evident that there has been a great shifting of the rural population of England since the railway era, but we are too matter-of-fact to complain about it; we regard it as one of those unavoidable incidents of the changed times in which we live. In the Highlands of Scotland it is put down to the inhuman practices of the lairds in preferring herds of deer to a contented peasantry on their broad acres. In Ireland it becomes a chronic cause of disquiet and of crime, and there every transmigrating peasant becomes an exile, and the

landlord is the source of all the evil that overtakes the dispossessed tenant. But agrarian discontent is a far cry; and we should have raised it in England, and especially here in East Lancashire, only that we are so prosaic and so practical a people: "Ill fares the land to hastening ills a prey, where wealth accumulates and men decay." And the kindred couplet is like unto it, which says that "A bold peasantry, their country's pride, when once destroyed can never be supplied." These things have all their explanation in the changing circumstances of the times.

How different are our country villages and farmsteads to those in the neighbouring county of Yorkshire. Here we are strictly pastoral: there (I am speaking particularly of the North Riding), the farms are largely arable, and each farmstead nestles amongst its red-roofed barns, its warm-looking stacks of hay and wheat, its pleasant orchard, and its more or less trim-looking flower garden. In the harvest time the farms are all awake with the reaper's song, and the fields wave with the golden grain. The hedgerows, too, are all trimly kept, and every farm is like a congeries of cultivated gardens. Seen from a height, the variety in the landscape is very pleasing. Here it is, as in the Wesleyan hymn, all the fields stand dressed in living green, and for miles there is no break in the continuous verdure. Very pleasing: very refreshing to the eye; but lacking that variety which is necessary to the truly picturesque. And our farmsteads, how naked is their appearance; how bare: how bald. I will not trust myself to speak of our Lancashire

hedgerows. As fences, they are decidedly not a success. They look straggling, wild, uncared for, unkempt. It would give a Yorkshire farmer a fit of the dokdrums to travel through the Ribble valley, and to minutely observe all that is done there, and described under the one generic term of "farming." If he knew *Virgil*, which many of our farmers do now-a-days, he would certainly not connote the signs of what he saw as good husbandry.

Then our villages have a like bareness. In the North Riding the village streets are wide and open; the houses well set back in their commodious gardens; and even the cottager can boast of his fruit-laden orchard. Red roofs are everywhere the rule, and, as the arborial vegetation is always luxurious, very cozy and warm and comfortable the villages peer out in the swelling landscape. But, with slight exceptions, the whole of Eastern Yorkshire, from the Humber to the Tees, is a great land of husbandry, unbroken by the presence of great and industrious communities, and subsisting for generations upon such industries as naturally belong to the soil.

But here, again, man—even the farming man—is but a creature of circumstances. In East Lancashire, for the most part, the farmer is merely a neatherd. His cattle, his cows, his sheep, and his pigs are his prime concern. He would have no interest in the changing seasons but for the hay harvest. The congeries of great towns provide him with the ready means of disposing of his farm products—and it is not wheat or any other grain that they require from him, but

fresh butter, new laid eggs, new milk, and well-fed cattle in prime condition for the butcher. America, India, Russia, Egypt, Guernsey, Ireland, and the lands far away supply him with potatoes and "the flour of wheat" in greater abundance, and more cheaply, than these commodities can be raised at home.

As I turn the corner of the Nab, historic Whalley and all the fair valley of the Ribble comes fully into view. I will not dare to describe it—at least in this chapter—for already this is too much of the nature of a speculative discourse, unrelieved and unpunctuated, as it should be, by matters of fact detail. It is like a picture that is all cloud and horizon, and which the eye searches in vain to discover any object calculated to evoke a human interest. I must now proceed to make my canvas objective, even though I have to throw my sponge at it in disgust. Am I so pensively discursive, so objectlessly speculative, because in this journey I have no one to bear me company or rein in my imagination? Truly as the Scripture says, "It is not good for man to be alone."

If civilization has "dispossessed the swain" it has not been wholly without its benefits. That dirty Calder, cauldron-like stream, is not the clear river of life that aforetime skirted the walls of the Abbey, and ran limpid under the arches of the Whalley old bridge. That viaduct spanning the valley over which quick trains whisk, has nothing in keeping with the ruins of that fair tower, sacred once to quiet and holy contemplation. But when you come to think of it, the minds of men are brighter and livelier than of yore, and a foul and

brooding superstition no longer embitters the life of the aged, and makes the robust and healthy the prey of horrible and degrading fears. The printing press, the telegraph, and the railway have evicted the Witches effectually from the Ribble and all other valleys, and they have departed never to return.

Strong minds, says Scarsdale, often are unable to escape the thralldom of tradition and custom, with the help of liberal education and social intercourse. How then are the solitary farmers on the skirts of moorland wastes, to free themselves from hereditary superstition ? The strength of such traditions is often secret and unacknowledged. It nevertheless influences the life ; it lurks out of sight, ready to assert its powers in any great crisis of our being. It is a homage to the unseen and the unknown, in fearful contradiction with the teachings of Christianity, for it creates, like the religion of the Jezzidites, a ritual of propitiation to the malignant powers, instead of a prayer of faith to the All-merciful. The solitude of the life in the moorland farm houses does not, however, foster the influence of superstitious madness, perhaps, so much as the wild, stormy climate, which holds its blustering reign through six months of the year, in this region of morass and fog, dark clough, and craggy chasm. Night shuts in early. The sun has gone down through a portentous gulf of clouds which have seemed to swallow up the day in a pit of darkness. The wind moans through the night like a troubled spirit, shakes the house as though it demanded admittance from the storm, and rushes through the huge chimney (built two centuries ago for the log fires, and large hot heap of wood ashes) driv-

ing down a cloud of smoke and soot, as though by some wicked cantrip the witches careering in the storm, would scatter the embers, and fire the building. The lone watcher by some sick bed, shudders as the casements are battered by the tempest ; or the bough of some tree or a branch of ivy, strikes the panes like the hand of some unseen thing fumbling at the casement latch ; or, awake from pain or care, restless with fever or fatigue, or troubled with superstitious horror, the lone shepherd waits for the day, as for a reprieve to conscious guilt, and even trembles while he mutters some charm to exorcise the evil that rises exulting on the storm. A year of ill-luck comes. The ewes are barren ; the cows drop their untimely calves, though crooked sickles and lucky stones have been hung in the shippons. The milk is "byn-ged," or will not churn, though a hot poker has been used to spoil the witching. The horses escape from the stable at night, though there is a horse shoe over the door, and the hinds say they were carefully "heawsed an' fettled, an' t' doors o' weel latched, but t' feeorin (fairies) han' 'ticed them cawt o' t' leawphooles, an' flown wi' 'em o'er t' stone dykes, wi' o' t' yates tynt (gates shut), an' clapped 'em reet i' t' meadow, or t' corn, just wheer they shudna be." As the year advances with such misadventures, apprehension grows. Is there some evil eye on the house ? Will the oats ripen, or must they be cut green and given to the cattle ? Or, if they ripen, will the stormy autumn wrap its mantle of rain and mist so closely about them, that they cannot be housed before they have sprouted, or have spoiled ? The cold, bitter damp benumbs

the strength of the feeble ; appetite and health fail ; a fear creeps into the life. Fate seems to have dragged the sufferer into a vault of gloom, to whisper foreboding, and to inspire dread. These traditions of mischief, wrought by malignant men, inheriting the wicked craft and vindictive spite of the sorceress, are uttered at the fireside, or, if not so uttered, are brooded upon by a disturbed fancy.

In such fashion, more or less assuring, more or less illusory, does our author build up his theory of the origin of superstition. I mention it here because I am now supposed to be treading that "haunted, unholy ground," from whence, according to legend and the speculations of vivid imaginations, the witches used to start on their broom-stick journey across the Calder valley to Pendle Hill. Of their weird doings I intend to speak lengthily in my next chapter.



A TRAMP ACROSS THE NAB FROM HARWOOD TO WHALLEY.

II.—MORE ABOUT LANCASHIRE WITCH SUPERSTITIONS.—THE
LORE OF PENDLE.—THE FIRST ILLUSTRIOUS WITCH.—
A HOUSEHOLD BEWITCHED.—THE BRITISH SOLOMON.—
THE LANCASHIRE TRIALS.—RIDICULOUS TERRORISM.

IN the latter years of the Century of Light we laugh at superstition. But even yet are there not many amongst us who would feel our flesh creep if we had to pass solitarily through a lonely wood at midnight? Are there none of us superstitious about old time usages and customs? What about our extreme reverence for the Sabbath, which I am not going to decry, but which in this country is undoubtedly carried to a great extreme. What good wife would feel unconcerned if she had lost her wedding ring? And are there not many modern cults which are almost wholly made up of superstitions? I am afraid I am of the old time faith that there will never come a time when men will be wholly emancipated from silly day dreams. If wisdom is advancing with great strides, ignorance recuperates

itself in every new generation, and the organ of faith—which in exaggeration means credulity—and wonder, is still a part of the phrenological endowment of mankind.

In Lancashire one comes across many peculiarities, not to say ignorances. The old sour Puritan leaven, with which I never had any sympathy, works here yet, and hence it is that so many of our people are named not after the saints of the New but of the Old Testament. Elijah and Abraham will feel highly honoured if they can look down from above, and see how freely the fathers and mothers of Lancashire, even in the present generation, have owned their stern virtues by giving their not too pleasant sounding designations as *Christian* names to their offspring. I have no objection either to Abraham or Elijah, except that they are far fetched, and in the mouths of Puritans, at any rate, are sadly out of place. And, moreover, they are not musical: but hard and harsh. They carry you so far back, and they are so patriarchal. You can hardly conceive of an infant Abraham, yet in Lancashire there are many who cannot, for lack of language, invite you to their bosoms. But the quaint custom is dying out, and there is no need that I should trouble myself to put a nail in its coffin.

Then we have another idiosyncrasy. All our writers who have put their pen to paper have felt it necessary, at some time or other, to discourse about Pendle, and hence it has come about that we have accumulated a mass of lore, mis-called historic, and literature, about this far-famed hill that is simply bewildering in its volume. Whole series of books

might be written on the literature of Pendle. Rome and Athens themselves almost pale their ineffectual fires before our Lancashire mountain, if all that is written of it be in any way true. But that is a big "if," and, of course, all Pendle literature must be swallowed with the proverbial grain of salt. Pendle was, in olden times, the great resort of the witches, and the witch superstition was at its climax when the Puritan leaven was working most energetically in the national life, and in the time when our fore-elders betook themselves to conferring the Hebraic names upon their children, of which I have spoken. It was a vile and cruel superstition. We cannot realise, in these times, how it must have embittered social life; how it must have added additional poignancy to the sad lot of the aged and infirm; and how it must have poisoned the very sources of family life, and brought horrible pain and sorrow into many an innocent home? And let us remember that all this wrong was done under religious sanction, and drew its warrant from the sacred oracles themselves.

We read in *Lancashire Folk Lore* that on the points of witches and witchcraft, no county in England is richer than Lancashire. The subject (says the writer) is a large one, and may even be said to include all cases of demoniacal possession since all these alleged possessions were the result of malice and so-called witchcraft. Indeed, it is not easy to separate these two superstitious beliefs in their practical operation; witchcraft being the supposed cause, and demoniacal possession the imagined effect. The first distinct charge of witchcraft in

any way connected with the county is that of the wife of the good Duke Humphrey, Eleanor, Duchess of Gloucester, the associate of Roger Bolinbroke, the priest and necromancer, and Margaret Jourdain, the witch of Eye. The Duke of Gloucester, uncle and protector to the King, having become obnoxious to the predominant party, they got up in Kent a strange prosecution. The Duchess of Gloucester, Eleanor, the daughter of Lord Cobham, a lady of haughty carriage and ambitious mind, being attached to the prevailing superstitions of the day, was accused of the crime of witchcraft, "for that she, by sorcery and enchantment, intended to destroy the king, to the intent to advance and promote her husband to the crown." It was alleged against her and her associates, Sir Roger Bolinbroke, a priest, and chaplain to the Duke (who was addicted to astrology), and Marjery Jourdain, the witch of Eye, that they had in their possession a wax figure of the King, which they melted by a magical device before a slow fire, with the intention of wasting away his force and vigour by insensible degrees. The imbecile mind of Henry was sensibly affected by this wicked invention; and the Duchess of Gloucestershire, upon being brought to trial (in St. Stephen's Chapel, by the Archbishop of Canterbury), and found guilty of the design to destroy the King and his Ministers by the agency of witchcraft, was sentenced to do public penance in three places within the City of London, and to suffer perpetual imprisonment. Her confederates were condemned to death and executed, Margarey Jourdain being burnt to death in Smithfield. The duchess, after undergoing the ignominy

of a public penance, rendered peculiarly severe by the exalted state from which she had fallen, was banished to the Isle of Man, where she was placed under the ward of Sir Thomas Stanley. On her way to the place of exile, she was confined for some time, first in Leeds Castle and afterwards in the Castle of Liverpool, according to the *Annales Rerum Anglicanum* of William of Worcester. She was the earliest and noblest witch on record within the County of Lancaster. Another account states that amongst those arrested as accomplices of the Duchess were a canon and priest of St. Stephen's, Westminster, named Southwell, and another priest named Hum, or Hume. Roger Bolinbroke, the learned astronomer and astrologer (who died protesting his ignorance of evil intentions) was drawn and quartered at Tyburn; Southwell died in prison before the time of execution; and John Hum received the Royal pardon. The worst thing found against the duchess was that she had sought for love philters to secure the constancy of her husband. Shakspeare, in the *Second Part of King Henry VI.*, Act 1, Scene 4, represents the duchess, Margery Jourdain, Hume, Southwell, and Bolinbroke, as engaged in raising an evil spirit in the Duke of Gloucester's garden, where they are surprised and seized by the Dukes of York and Buckingham, and their guards. The duchess, after remaining in the Isle of Man some years, was transferred to Calais, under the ward of Sir John Stewart, Knight, and there died.

During the sixteenth century, continues the same history, whole districts in some parts of Lancashire seemed contamin-

ated with the presence of witches; men and beasts were supposed to languish under their charm, and the delusion which preyed alike on the learned and the vulgar, did not allow any family to suppose that they were beyond the reach of the witch's power. Was the family visited by sickness? It was believed to be the work of an invisible agency, which in secret wasted the image made in clay before the fire, or crumbled its various parts into dust. Did the cattle sicken and die? The witch and the wizard were the authors of the calamity. Did the yeast refuse to ferment, either in the bread or in the beer? It was the consequence of a "bad wish." Did the butter refuse to *come*? The "familiar" was in the churn. Did the ship founder at sea? The gale or hurricane was blown by the lungless hag, who had scarcely sufficient breath to cool her own pottage. Did the Ribble overflow its banks? The flood descended from the congregated sisterhood of Malkin tower. The blight of the season, which consigned the crops of the farmer to destruction, was the saliva of the enchantress, or a distillation from the bleary-eyed dame who flew by night over the field on mischief bent. To refuse an alms to a haggard mendicant was to incur maledictions soon manifest in afflictions of the body, mind, or estate, in loss of cattle or other property, of health, and sometimes even of life itself. To escape from evils like these no sacrifice was thought too great. Superstitions begat cruelty and injustice; the poor and the rich were equally interested in obtaining a deliverance; and the magistrate in his mansion, no less than the peasant in his cot, was deeply interested in abating the

universal affliction. The Lancashire witches were principally fortune-tellers and conjurors. The alleged securities against witchcraft were numerous, the most popular being the horse-shoe ; hence we see in Lancashire so many thresholds ornamented with the counter-charm. Under such circumstances the situation of the reputed witch was not more enviable than that of the individuals or families over whom she exerted her influence. Linked by a species of infernal compact to an imaginary imp, she was shunned as a common pest, or caressed only on the same principle which leads some Indian tribes to pay homage to the devil. The reputed witches themselves were frequently disowned by their families, feared and detested by their neighbours, and hunted by the dogs as pernicious monsters. When apprehended they were cast into ponds in the belief that witches swim ; so that sink or swim was equally perilous to them ; they were punctured by bodkins to discover the witch, imp, or devil marks ; they were subjected to hunger and kept in continual motion until confessions were extracted from a distracted mind. On their trials they were listened to with incredulity and horror, and consigned to the gallows with as little pity as the basest of malefactors. Their imaginary crimes created a thirst for their blood ; and people of all stations, from the highest to the lowest, attended their trials at Lancaster with an intensity of interest that such mischievous persons, now divested of their sting, naturally excited. It has been said that witchcraft and Kingcraft in England came in and went out with the Stuarts. This is not true. The doctrine of

necromancy was in universal belief in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and there was not perhaps a man in Lancashire who doubted its existence. The belief in witchcraft and in demoniacal possession was confined to no particular sect or persuasion, the Roman Catholics, the members of the Church of England, the Presbyterians, Independents, and even the Methodists (though a sect of more recent standing), have all fallen into the delusion ; and yet each denomination has upbraided the other with gross superstition, and not unfrequently with wilful fraud. It is due, however, to the ministers of the Established Church to say that they were among the first of our public writers to denounce the belief in witchcraft, with all its attendant mischiefs ; and the names of Dr. Harsnett, afterwards Archbishop of York ; of Dr. John Webster (who detected Robinson, the Lancashire witchfinder), of Zach Taylor, one of the king's preachers for Lancashire ; and of Dr. Hutchinson, the chaplain-in-ordinary to George I., are all entitled to the public gratitude for their efforts to explode these pernicious superstitions. For upwards of a century the sanguinary and superstitious laws of James I. disgraced the English statute book ; but in the ninth year of George II. (1735), a law was enacted repealing the statute of James I., and prohibiting any prosecution, suit, or proceeding against any person for witchcraft, sorcery, enchantment, or conjuration. In this way the doctrine of witchcraft with all its attendant evils, was finally exploded, except amongst the most ignorant of the vulgar.

Before I proceed to give a more detailed account of the

history of witchcraft which must always be an interesting study, and which fittingly comes in here, as we are resting awhile upon the Nab, and in the immediate vicinity of Pendle, let me quote from a comedy of the late Thomas Heywood, *The Late Lancashire Witches*, in which he describes "A Household Bewitched."

My Uncle has of late become the sole
Discourse of all the country ; for a man respected
As master of a governed family ;
The house (as if the ridge were fixed below,
And ground sills lifted up to make the roof),
All now's turned topsy-turvy
In such a retrograde, preposterous way
As seldom has been heard of, I think never.
The good man
In all obedience kneels unto his son ;
He with an austere brow, commands his Father.
The Wife presumes not in the Daughter's sight
Without a prepared curtesy ; the Girl, she
Expects it as a duty, chides her mother,
Who quakes and trembles at each word she speaks ;
And what's as strange, the Maid, she domineers
O'er her young Mistress, who is awed by her.
The Son, to whom the Father creeps and bends,
Stands in as much fear of the groom, his Man !
All in such rare disorder, that in some
As it breeds pity, and in others wonder,
So in the most part laughter. It is thought
This comes by witchcraft !

Very laughable, surely, now that we see all these things at a distance, but not so laughable to those who were affected

by so strange a condition of things. In the 19th century we have many foolish errors to mourn, but at least we may congratulate ourselves that more or less we hold old age and grey hairs in respect, and that we do not mistake the lack-lustre eye and the bowed gait of the infirm, as an indication of an evil spirit lurking within them. And we are not so foolish as to imagine that all the ills which happen to us arise from the influence of our baneful star, or through the occult machinations and doings of some wicked being of our own flesh and blood, in alliance with the unseen and wicked powers—with the Prince of Darkness and his mischief-making crew. Such superstitions have gone never to return, and so impossible of resurrection are they, that we look back with incredulity; and wonder how it came about that they exercised such an universal sway in past ages.

Following the same authority, *Lancashire Folk Lore*, that I have already quoted at length, we learn that in 1594, nearly at the same time that Shakspere wrote his description of the witches in *Macbeth*, King James VI. of Scotland wrote and published his credulous treatise on Dæmonologie, containing statements as to the making of witches, and witchcraft, which, *if true*, would only prove their revealer to be deep in the secrets of Satan, and a regular member or attendant of assemblages of witches. The royal witch hater held that as witchcraft is an act of treason against the prince, the evidence of children, or weak women, “or ever so depraved persons,” may serve for sufficient witness against them; for “who but witches can be provers, and so witnesses

of the doings of witches?" Besides evidence "there are two good helps that may be used for their trial: the one is the finding of their mark, and the trying the insensibleness thereof; the other is floating on the water," etc. Having thus opened the door by admitting the loosest evidence and the most absurd tests for the most unjust convictions, the royal fanatic adds that all witches ought to be put to death, without distinction of age, sex, or rank. This British Solomon ascended the English throne in 1603, and, as might have been expected, witch-finders soon plied their infamous vocation with success. The wild and desolate parts of the parish of Whalley furnished a fitting scene for witch assemblies, and it was alleged that such meetings were held at Malkin Tower, in Pendle Forest, within that parish. At the Assizes at Lancaster, in the autumn of 1612, twenty persons, of whom sixteen were women of various ages, were committed for trial, and most of them tried for witchcraft. Their names were:—1, Elizabeth Southerne, widow, *alias* "Old Demdike," aged 80 or more; 2, Elizabeth Device, *alias* "Young Demdike," her daughter; 3, James Device, son of No. 2; Anne Whittle, widow, *alias* "Chattox," *alias* "Chatterbox," the rival witch of "Old Demdike," and like her 80 or more years of age; Anne Redferne, daughter of No. 5; 7, Alice Nutter; 8, Katherine Hewytt, *alias* "Mouldheels"; 9, Jane Bulcock, of the Moss End; 10, John Bulcock, her son; 11, Isabel Robey; and, 12, Margaret Pearson, of Padiham. No. 12 was tried first for murder by witchcraft; 2nd, for bewitching a neighbour; 3rd, for bewitching a horse;

and, being acquitted of the former charges, was sentenced for the last to stand upon the pillory in the markets of Clitheroe, Padiham, Colne, and Lancaster for four successive market days, with a printed paper upon her head stating her offences. The twelve persons already named were styled "Witches of Pendle Forest." The following eight were styled "Witches of Samlesbury :"—13, Jennet Bierley ; 14, Ellen Bierley ; 15, Jane Southworth ; 16, John Ramsden ; 17, Elizabeth Askey ; 18, Alice Gray ; 19, Isabel Sidegreaves ; and 20, Lawrence Hays. The last four were all discharged without trial. The sensation produced by these trials was immense, not only in this but throughout the neighbouring counties, and Mr. Thomas Potts, the Clerk of the Court, was directed by the Judges of Assize, Sir Edward Bromley, Knt., and Sir James Altham, Knt., to collect and publish the evidence and other documents connected with the trial, under the revision of the Judges themselves ; and Potts' "Discovery of Witches," originally published in 1613, has been reprinted by the Chetham Society (vol. vi.), under the editorship of its president, Mr. James Crossley, F.S.A. According to Potts, Old Mother Demdike, the principal actress in the tragedy, was a general agent for the devil in all these parts ; no man escaping her or her furies that ever gave them occasion of offence, or denied them anything they stood in need of. The justices of the peace in this part of the country, Roger Nowell and Nicholas Bannister, having learned that Malkin Tower, in the Forest of Pendle, the residence of Old Demdike and her daughter, was the resort of the witches, ventured to arrest their head

and another of her followers, and to commit them to Lancaster Castle. Among the rest of the voluntary confessions made by the witches that of Dame Demdike is preserved. She confessed that about twenty years ago, as she was coming home from begging, she was met near Gould's Hey, in the Forest of Pendle, by a spirit or devil in the shape of a boy, the one half of his coat black and the other brown, who told her to stop, and said that if she would give him her soul, she should have anything she wished for. She asked his name, and was told *Tib*. She consented, from the hope of gain, to give her soul. For several years she had no occasion to make any application to her evil spirit; but one Sunday morning, having a little child upon her knees, and she being in a slumber, the spirit appeared to her in the likeness of a brown dog, and forced himself upon her knee, and began to suck her blood under her left arm, on which she exclaimed, "Jesus, save me!" and the brown dog vanished, leaving her almost stark mad for eight week. On another occasion she was led, being blind, to the house of Richard Baldwyn, to obtain payment for the services her daughter had performed at his mill, when Baldwyn fell into a passion, and bid them to get off his ground, calling them w——s and witches, and saying he would burn the one and hang the other. On this *Tib* appeared, and they concerted matters to revenge themselves on Baldwyn, how is not stated. This poor mendicant pretender to the powers of witchcraft, in her examination, stated that the surest way of taking a man's life by witchcraft is to make a picture of clay, like unto the shape of the

person meant to be killed, and when they would have the object of their vengeance suffer in any particular part of his body, to take a thorn or pin and prick it into that part of the effigy; and when they would have any of the body to consume away, then to burn that part of the figure; and when they would have the whole body to consume, then to burn the clay image; by which means the afflicted will die. The substance of the examination of the so-called witches and others, may be given as follows:—Old Demdike persuaded her daughter, Elizabeth Device, to sell herself to the devil, which she did, and in turn initiated her daughter, Alizon Device, in these infernal arts. When the old witch had been sent to Lancaster Castle, a grand convention of seventeen witches and three wizards was held at Malkin Tower on Good Friday, at which it was determined to kill Mr. McCovell, the governor of the Castle, and to blow up the building to enable the witches to make their escape. The other two objects of this convocation were to christen the familiar of Alizon Device, one of the witches in the Castle, and also to bewitch and murder Mr. Lister, a gentleman of Westby-in-Craven, Yorkshire. The business being ended, the witches in quitting the meeting walked out of the barn, named Malkin Tower, in their proper shapes, but on reaching the door each mounted his or her spirit, which was in the form of a spirited horse, and quickly vanished. Before the assizes, Old Demdike, worn out by age and trouble, died in prison. The others were brought to trial. The first person arraigned before Sir Edward Bromley, who presided in the

Criminal Court, was Ann Whittle, *alias* "Chattox," who is described by Potts as a very old, withered, spent, and decrepit creature, eighty years of age, and nearly blind, a dangerous witch of very long countenance, always opposed to Old Demdike, for whom the one favoured, the other hated deadly, and they accused each other in their examinations. This witch was more mischievous to men's goods than to themselves: her lips ever chattered as she walked (hence probably her name of Chattox or Chatterbox), but no one knew what she said. Her abode was in the Forest of Pendle, amongst the company of other witches, where the woollen trade was carried on, she having been in her younger days a wool carder. She was indicted for having exercised various wicked and devilish arts called witchcrafts, enchantments, charms, and sorceries, upon Robert Nutter, of Greenhead, in the Forest of Pendle, and with having, by force thereof, feloniously killed him. To establish this charge her own examination was read, from which it appears that fourteen or fifteen years ago, a thing like a "Christian man" had importuned her to sell her soul to the devil, and that she had done so, giving to her familiar the name of *Fancy*. On account of an insult offered to her daughter, Redfern, by Robert Nutter, they two conspired to put a bad wish upon Nutter, of which he died. It was further deposed against her that John Device had agreed to give Old Chattox a dole of meal yearly if she would not hurt him, and that when he ceased to make this yearly tribute, he took to his bed and died. She was further charged with having

bewitched the drink of John Moore, and also with having, without using a churn, produced a quantity of butter from a dish of skimmed milk. In the face of this evidence, and no longer anxious about her own life, she acknowledged her guilt, but humbly prayed the judges to be merciful to her own daughter, Ann Redfern ; but her prayer was in vain. Against Elizabeth Device, the testimony of her own daughter, a child nine years of age, was received ; and the way in which her evidence was given, instead of filling the court with horror, seems to have excited their applause and admiration. Her familiar had the form of a dog, and was called *Bull*, and by his agency she bewitched to death John and James Robinson and James Mitton ; the first having called her a strumpet, and the last having refused to give Old Demdike a penny when she asked him for charity. To render her daughter proficient in the art, the prisoner taught her two prayers, by one of which she cured the bewitched, and by the other procured drink. The person of Elizabeth Device, as described by Potts, seems witch-like. "She was branded (says he) with a preposterous mark in nature ; her left eye standing lower than the right ; the one looking down and the other up at the same time." Her process of destruction was by modelling clay or marl figures, and wasting her victims away along with them. James Device was convicted principally on the evidence of his child sister, of bewitching and killing Mrs. Ann Townley, the wife of Mr. Henry Townley, at Carr, by means of a picture of clay ; and both he and his sister were

witnesses against their mother. This wizard (J. Device) whose spirit was called *Dandy*, is described as a poor decrepit boy, apparently of weak intellect, and so infirm that it was found necessary to hold him up in court on his trial.



A TRAMP ACROSS THE NAB FROM HARWOOD TO WHALLEY.

III.—THE WITCH TRIALS AT LANCASTER.—THE BOY ROBINSON.
—THE IDIOTCY OF THE LAW.—A WISE KING.—THE
CLOUD OF SUPERSTITION LIFTS.—THE POWER OF WITCHES.
—THEIR PROTEAN CHANGES.—A WRETCHED BOY IN-
FORMER.—THE SUPERSTITION NOT LOCAL.

NO fewer than ten unfortunate people, misnamed witches, were found guilty at Lancaster, and were sentenced to suffer death, upon evidence of the kind such as I detailed in the previous chapter. Eight others were acquitted; why, it is not easy to see, for the evidence appears to have been equally strong, or rather, equally weak and absurd, against all. The ten persons sentenced were—Ann Whittle, *alias* “Chattox,” Elizabeth Device, James Device, Anne Redfern, Alice Nutter, Catherine Henry, John Bulcock, Alizon Device, and Isabel Robey.

The Judge, Sir Edward Bromley, in passing sentence upon the prisoners, such was the dense ignorance of the times even in the highest places, said: “You, of all people, have

the least cause of complaint ; since on the trial for your lives there hath been much care and pains taken ; and what persons of your nature and condition were ever arraigned and tried with so much solemnity ? The Court hath had great care to receive nothing in evidence against you but matter of fact (!) As you stand simply (your offences and bloody practises not considered) your fate would rather move compassion than exasperate any man ; for whom would not the ruin of so many poor creatures at one time touch, as in appearance simple, and of little understanding ? But the blood of these innocent children and others, His Majesty's subjects, whom cruelly and barbarously you have murdered and cut off, cries unto the Lord for vengeance. It is impossible that you, who are stained with so much innocent blood, should either prosper or continue in this world, or receive reward in the next." Having thus shut the door of hope both for this life and the future, the Judge proceeded to urge the wretched victims of superstition to repentance ! and concluded by sentencing them all to be hanged. They were executed at Lancaster on the 20th of August, 1612, for having bewitched to death, "by devilish practises and hellish means," no fewer than sixteen inhabitants of the Forest of Pendle. These were Robert Nutter, of Greenhead. 2. Richard Assheton, son of Richard Assheton, Esq., of Downham, 3. A child of Richard Baldwin, of Westhead, in the Forest of Pendle. 4. John Device, or Davies, of Pendle. 5. Ann Nutter, daughter of Anthony Nutter of Pendle. 6. A child of John Moor, of Higham. 7. Hugh Moor, of Pendle ;

8. John Robinson, *alias* Swyer. 9. James Robinson. 10. Henry Mytton, of Rough Lee. 11. Ann Townley, wife of Henry Townley, of Carr Hall, gentleman. 12. John Duckworth. 13. John Hargreaves, of Goldshaw Booth. 14. Blaize Hargreaves, of Higham. 15. Christopher Nutter. 16. Ann Folds, near Colne. John Law, a pedlar, was also bewitched, so as to lose the use of his limbs, by Alizon Device, because he refused to give her some pins without money, when requested to do so by her on his way from Colne. Alizon Device herself was a beggar by profession, and the evidence sufficiently proved that Law's affliction was nothing more than what would now be termed paralysis of the lower extremities.

In his *Introduction to Pott's Discovery of Witches*, Mr. Crossley observes that "the main interest in reviewing this miserable band of victims will be felt to centre in Alice Nutter. Wealthy, well-conducted, and well-connected, and placed probably on an equality with most of the neighbouring families, and the magistrate before whom she was brought and by whom she was committed, she deserves to be distinguished from the companions with whom she suffered, and to attract an attention which has never yet been directed to her. That James Device, on whose evidence she was convicted, was instructed to accuse her by her own nearest relatives, and that the magistrate, Roger Nowell, entered actively as a confederate into the conspiracy, for a grudge entertained against her on account of a long disputed boundary, are allegations which tradition has preserved, but the truth or falsehood of which, at this distance of time, it is scarcely possible satis-

factorily to examine. Her mansion, Rough Lee, is still standing, a very substantial and rather fine specimen of the houses of the inferior gentry, *temp.* James I., but now divided into cottages.

At the same assizes, and before the same judge, the Samlesbury Witches also came up for trial. I may mention the cases here simply to show the shameful nature of the evidence which was often adduced to secure the condemnation of suspected persons. Against Jane and Ellen Bierley and Jane Southworth, all of Samlesbury, charged with having bewitched Grace Sowerbutts there, the only material evidence was that of Grace Sowerbutts herself, a girl of licentious and vagrant habits, who swore that these women (one of them being her grandmother) did draw her by the hair of the head and lay her upon the top of a hay-mow, and did take her senses and memory from her; that they appeared to her sometimes in their own likeness, and sometimes like a black dog. She declared that they by their arts had induced her to join their sisterhood; and that they were met from time to time by "four black things going upright, and yet not like men in the face," who conveyed them across the Ribble, where they danced with them, &c. The prisoners were also charged with bewitching and slaying a child of Thomas Walshman's, by placing a nail in its navel; and after its burial, they took up the corpse, when they ate part of the flesh, and made an "*unrious* ointment" by boiling the bones. This was more than even the capacious credulity of the judge and jury could digest. The Samlesbury witches were there-

fore acquitted, and a seminary priest, named Thompson *alias* Southworth, was suspected by two of the county magistrates (the Rev. William Leigh and Edward Chisnall, Esq.) to whom the affair was afterwards referred, of having instigated Sowerbutts to make the charge ; but this imputation was not supported by any satisfactory evidence.

In the middle of the seventeenth century there was but little abatement in the prevailing persecution of these wretched creatures, who, by their personal ailments and defects, had excited the animosity or distrust of their neighbours. In 1633, a number of poor and ignorant people, inhabitants of Pendle Forest, or the neighbourhood, were apprehended, upon the information of a boy named Edmund Robinson, and charged with the offence of witchcraft, and, upon the silliest and flimsiest evidence, were also committed to Lancaster Castle for trial. There, a jury, doubtless full of prejudice and superstitious fear, found seventeen of them guilty. The judge, however, respited the convicts, and reported the case to the King in Council. They were next remitted to the Bishop of Chester, who certified his opinion of the case, which, however, was not made public. Subsequently, four of these poor women, Margaret Johnson, Frances Dickonson, Mary Spencer, and the wife of one of the Hargreaves's, were sent for to London, and examined, first by the King's physicians and surgeons, and afterwards by Charles I. in person. The strangest part of this sad story of superstition is, that one of the four, who underwent examination, doubtless after much badgering,

bullying, and artful questioning, or weary and tired of life and seeing her prospects ruined, actually made a confession of her guilt as a witch. When this was made it does not appear, but the confession is preserved in Dodsworth's Collection of MSS.

It is satisfactory to know that all these examinations of these poor creatures, deluding others and themselves deluded—examinations made by legal, ecclesiastical, and royal authorities—had a beneficial result. In this particular instance strong presumption was afforded that the chief witness, the boy Robinson, had been suborned to accuse the prisoners falsely ; and they were accordingly discharged. The boy afterwards confessed that he was suborned. The story excited at the time so much interest in the public, that in the following year, 1634, a play was acted and published called “The Witches of Lancashire,” which Stevens cites in illustration of Shakspeare's witches. Thus public opinion began to exercise its influence in dissipating the enormities of a silly superstition, and doubtless a wiser court, and a king freed from the mania of his time, had something to say in the more sensible and merciful settlement of these cases.

As showing how these proceedings—the arrest of witches and the presumed disclosure of their acts were regarded by persons of station and education—W. N. S., in *Notes and Queries*, volume iv., second series, page 365, quotes a letter from Sir William Pelham, written May 16th, 1634, to Lord Conway, in which the following passages occur :—“The greatest news from the country is of a huge pack of witches,

which are lately discovered in Lancashire, whereof, 'tis said, 19 are condemned, and that there are at least 60 already discovered, and yet daily there are more revealed ; there are divers of them of good ability, and they have done much harm. I hear it is suspected that they had a hand in raising the great storm, wherein His Majesty [Charles I.] was in so great danger at sea in Scotland."

Dr. Webster, in his *Display of Witchcraft*, depicts the consternation and alarm amongst the old and decrepit, from the machinations of the witch-finders. Of the boy Robinson, who was a witness on several occasions of witches, he says:—"This said boy was brought into the church at Kildwick, a large parish church, where I, being then curate there, was preaching in the afternoon, and was set upon a stool to look about him, which moved some little disturbance in the congregation for a while. After prayers, I enquired what the matter was. The people told me it was the boy that discovered witches ; upon which I went to the house where he was to stay all night, and here I found him, and two very unlikely persons that did conduct him and manage the business. I desired to have some discourse with the boy in private, but that they utterly refused. Then, in the presence of a great many people, I took the boy near me and said : 'Good boy, tell me truly and in earnest, didst thou see such strange things at the meeting of witches as is reputed thou didst relate.' But the two men, not giving the boy leave to answer, did pluck him from me and said 'he had been examined by two *able* justices of the peace, and

they did never ask him such a question.' To whom I replied, 'The persons accused had therefore the more wrong.'" Dr. Webster subsequently adds that the boy Robinson, in more mature years, acknowledged that he had been instructed and suborned to make the accusations against the accused persons by his father and others, and that, of course, the whole was a fraud. By such wicked means and un-Christian practices, divers innocent persons lost their lives; and these wicked rogues wanted not greater persons (even of the ministry, too) that did authorise and encourage them in their diabolical courses; and the like in my time happened here in Lancashire, where divers, both men and women, were accused of supposed witchcraft, and were so un-Christianly and inhumanly handled, as to be stripped stark naked, and laid upon tables and beds to be searched for their supposed witch-marks; so barbarous and cruel acts doth diabolical instigation, working upon ignorance and superstition, produce

This debasing and degrading superstition, which reached its meridian in the time of James the First, still lingered on, though witch trials and witch executions became less numerous. In the Ribble valley the morning light seems to have been long delayed, and here the population, until quite recent times, believed in witch stories and the demoniacal power of these uncanny persons. On February 23rd, 1673, writes Dr. Webster, "I myself have known two supposed witches to be put to death at Lancaster within these last eighteen years, that did utterly deny any league

or covenant with the devil, or even to have seen any visible devil at all; and may not the confession of those, who both died penitent, be as well credited as the confessions of those who were brought to such confessions by force, or cunning persuasion, or allurement?"

At Liverpool and in the Fylde, records of witches in the 17th and 18th century have come down to us. Mag Shelton, "The Witch of Singleton," was a famous person in her day. Her food, we are told, was *haggis*, made of boiled groats, mixed with thyme or parsley. Many are the wild tales related of her dealings in the black art. The cows of her neighbours were constantly milked by her; the pitcher in which she conveyed the stolen milk away walking before her in the shape of a goose. Under this guise her depredations were said to be carried on until a neighbour, suspecting the trick, struck the seeming goose, and, lo! immediately it was changed into a broken pitcher, and the vaccine liquor flowed. Once only was this witch spoiled by a powerful spell, the contrivance of a maiden, who, having seated her in a chair, before a large fire, and stuck a bodkin, crossed with two weaver's healds, about her person, thus fixed her irremovably to her seat.

But I might fill volumes with the records of these dreary superstitions, which were not by any means confined to Lancashire or the near neighbourhood of Pendle. They were prevalent all over the North Country, and assumed various and at all times revolting forms. It is clear from the evidence that the persons upon whom the possession of uncanny powers

was fastened were either aged or deformed. The most singular thing in connection with these witch-finding proceedings is the readiness with which some of the persons accused confessed themselves that they had the powers which were attributed to them. But this is accounted for by the fact that weak minds are really flattered when either virtues or powers are attributed to them which they know themselves they do not possess. Then, in many cases, the mere suspicion of the possession of the power of witchcraft was sufficient to ruin, in a material sense, the person against whom it was made. The witch was boycotted by her neighbours—and was an object of dread to the whole parish. No one would employ her : no one would trust her. Is there any wonder, then, that to such life became a burden, and that they were ready under the harsh treatment of inhuman laws, and the penal discipline to which they were subject, to forswear themselves in order to get rid of the ills they endured, and so to part company with a world in which they were so persecuted and misjudged, in the hope that they might attain to a more merciful hereafter.

The witches were supposed to exercise their diabolic powers in their league with Satan by a variety of spells and charms, and they were also supposed to have the gift of changing their shape at will, especially when they were in danger. The following is a description of a spell which is said to have been regularly used by “Mother Grady, the Witch of Penmure” :—“A spell is a piece of paper written with magical characters, fixed in a critical season of the moon,

and conjunction of the planets; or sometimes by repeating some mystical words. Of these there are many sorts." Some were supposed to exert their evil powers by means of the stars, and some were credited, like the witches in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, with a power of lying prophecy. They were supposed to be subject in their evil work to the influence of religious exorcism. They were powerless in the presence of the sign of the cross, or when the name of Jesus was pronounced. They could assume Protean shapes, so it was alleged. It is recorded that some of them hunted game as black dogs, and that they themselves were at times hunted in the shape of stags and hares.

It is hardly to be wondered at that persons with such supernatural and occult powers should be looked upon at times as hardly amenable to human justice. One night it is reported that the doors of all the prisons in which they were confined flew open, and they made their escape; and many, when they were cast into the water for trial, swam like a cork. One of them boasted that she could go over the sea in an egg-shell, and there were people who were credulous enough to believe her. It was held upon all hands that they were sold to the Devil, and became his bond slaves to live a few years for pleasure and revenge, or to work evil upon their fellow-creatures, against whom they had conceived some grudge or dislike. Many of them were reported to be more mischievous than others in laming cattle and maiming and destroying them, and in sinking ships at sea by raising storms. The Lancashire Witches are generally depicted as

diverting themselves in mischievous merriment, and are more sociable than the rest. A poem on the "Lancashire Witches" in Lancashire *Folk Lore*, sets forth their uncanny powers in a kind of catalogued order:—

Blow houses down, ye jolly dames,
Or burn them up in fiery flames ;
Let's rouse up mortals from their sleep,
And send them packing to the deep ;
Let's strike them dead with thunder stones,
With lightning search to skin and bones.

* * * *

Sometimes in dismal caves we lie,
Or in the air aloft we fly ;
Sometimes we caper o'er the main,
Thunders and lightnings we disdain ;
Sometimes we tumble churches down,
And level castles with the ground ;
We fire whole cities, and destroy
Whole armies, if they us annoy.

We strangle infants in the womb,
And raise the dead out of their tomb ;
We haunt the palaces of Kings,
And play such pranks and pretty things ;
And this is all our chief delight—
To do all mischief in despite ;
And when we've done, to shift away
Untouched, unseen, by night or day.

* * * *

In puppets' wax, sharp needles' points
We stick, to torture limbs and joints.
With frogs, and toads' most poisonous gore
Our grizly limbs we 'noint all o'er,
And straight away, away we go,
Sparing no mortal, friend or foe.

We'll sell you winds, and ev'ry charm,
Or venomous drug that may do harm ;
For beasts or fowls we have our spells
Laid up in store in our dark cells ;
For there the devils used to meet,
And dance with horns and cloven feet ;
And when we've done we frisk about,
And through the world play revel-rout.

We ride on cows' and horses' backs,
O'er lakes and rivers play nice knacks ;
We grasp the moon and scale the sun,
And stop the planets as they run.
We kindle comets' whizzing flames,
And whistle for the winds by names ;
And for our pastimes and mad freaks,
'Mongst stars we play at barley-breaks.

We are ambassadors of state,
And know the mysteries of fate ;
In Pluto's bosom there we ly,
To learn each mortal's destiny.
As oracles their fortunes show,
If they be born to wealth or wo,
The spinning Sisters' hands we guide,
And in all this we take a pride.

To Lapland, Finland, we do skice.
Sliding on seas and rocks of ice,
T' old beldames there, our sisters kind,
We do impart our hellish mind ;
We take their seals and hands in blood
For ever to renounce all good.
And then, as they in dens do lurk,
We set the ugly jades a-work.

We know the treasures and the stores
Lock'd up in caves with brazen doors ;
Gold and silver, sparkling stones,
We pile on heaps, like dead men's bones.
There the devils brood and hover,
Keep guard, that none should them discover ;
Put upon all the coasts of hell,
'Tis we, 'tis we, stand sentinel.

The boy Robinson to whom I have already alluded, made deposition before two justices of the peace in February, 1633, that on a certain day when he was "getting bulloes, he saw two greyhounds, a black one and a brown one, coming running over the next field towards him." "The said greyhounds came to him and fawned on him, they having about their necks either of them a collar, and to either of which collars was tied a string, which collars, as this informant affirmeth, did shine like gold." "Seeing nobody to follow them, he took the said greyhounds thinking to hunt with them, and presently a hare rose very near before him, at the sight of which he cried 'Loo! loo!' but the dogs would not run. Whereupon, being very angry, he took them, and with

the strings that were at their collars, tied either of them to a little bush on the next hedge, and with a rod that he had in his hand he beat them. And instead of the black greyhound, one Dickonson's wife stood up (a neighbour), whom this informer knoweth; and instead of the brown greyhound a little boy, whom this informer knoweth not. At which sight this informer being afraid, endeavoured to run away, but being stayed by the woman who put her hand into her pocket and pulled out a piece of silver much like to a fair shilling, and offered to give him to hold his tongue, and not to tell, which he refused, saying, 'Nay, thou art a witch.' Whereupon she put her hand into her pocket again and pulled out a string like unto a bridle that jingled, which she put upon the little boy's head that stood up in the brown greyhound's stead; whereupon the said boy stood up a white horse. Then immediately the said Dickonson's wife took this informer before her on the said horse, and carried him to a new house called Hoare-stones, being about a quarter of a mile off; whither when they were come there were divers persons about the door, and he saw divers others come riding upon horses of several colours towards the said house, which tied their horses to a hedge near the said house, and which persons went into the said house, to the number of three score or thereabouts, as this informer thinketh, where they had a fire and meat roasting, and some other meat strung in the house, whereof a young woman, whom he, this informer, knoweth not, gave him flesh and bread upon a trencher, and drink in a glass, which, after the first taste he refused, and

would have no more, and said it was nought. And presently after, seeing divers of the company going to a barn adjoining he followed after, and there he saw six of them kneeling and pulling at six several ropes, which were fastened or tied to the top of the house, at or with which pulling came then into this informer's sight flesh smoking, butter in lumps, and milk as it were syling [skimming or straining] from the said ropes, all of which fell into basins which were placed under the said ropes. And after that these six had done there came other six, which did likewise; and during all the time of their so pulling, they made such foul faces that feared this informer, so as he was glad to steal out and run home; whom, when they wanted, some of their company came running after him, near to a place in a highway called boggard-hole, where this informer met two horsemen, at the sight whereof the said persons left following him; and the foremost of which persons that followed him he knoweth to be one Loynd wife, which said wife, together with one Dickonson wife, and one Janet Davies, he hath seen at several times in a croft or close adjoining to his father's house, which put him in a great fear. And further, this informer saith upon Thursday after New Year's Day last past, he saw the said Loynd wife sitting upon a cross-piece of wood, being near the chimney of his father's dwelling house, and he, calling to her, said, 'Come down, thou Loynd wife,' and immediately the said Loynd wife went up out of his sight. And further, this informer saith that after he was come from the company aforesaid to his father's house, being towards

evening, his father bade him to go and fetch home two kine to seal [cows to yoke], and in the way, in a field called the Ollers [*i.e.* the Alders] he chanced to hap upon a boy, who began to quarrel with him, and they fought so together until this informant had his ears made very bloody by fighting, and looking down he saw that the boy had a cloven foot, at which sight he was afraid and ran away from him to seek the kine. And in the way he saw a light like a lantern, towards which he made haste; . . . but when he came to the place he found only a woman standing on a bridge, whom, when he saw her, he knew to be Loynd wife, and knowing her, he turned back again, and immediately he met with the aforesaid boy, from whom he offered to run; which boy gave him a blow on the back which caused him to cry. And he further saith that when he was in the barn he saw three women take three pictures from off the beam, in the which pictures many thorns, or such like things, sticked; and that Loynd wife took one of the said pictures down, but the other two women that took the other two pictures down he knoweth not."

And this strange farrago of nonsense was believed, not only by the boy's father, but by the magistrates and jury before whom seventeen poor creatures were found guilty. This young wretch's father deposed: "That upon All Saints' Day he sent his son, the aforesaid informer, to fetch home two kine to seal, and said that he thought his son stayed longer than he should have done, and went to seek him; and in seeking him, heard him cry pitifully, and found

him so afraid and distracted, that he neither knew his father, nor did know where he was, and so continued very near a quarter of an hour before he came to himself, and he told this informer his father all the particular passages that are before declared in the said Edward Robinson, his son's information." I gave in detail the result of this trial in a previous chapter.

Witch spells were unloosened by similar means to those employed in forming them. A number of farmers suffering considerably from the loss of cattle, bewitched horses, and unproductiveness in sheep, determined to end their ill-fortune by "killing the witch." Their suspicion rested upon an old man, a noted astrologer and fortune teller, who resided near New Church in Rossendale. It was a cold November night when they commenced their witch-killing ceremonial. The farmers, however, were not to be deterred. They met at the house of one of their number, whose cattle were supposed to be under the influence of the wizard; and having procured a live cock chicken, they stuck him full of pins and burnt him alive, whilst repeating some silly form of exorcism. A cake was also made of oatmeal, mixed with the urine of those bewitched, and, after having been marked with the name of the person suspected, was then burnt in a similar manner. . . . The wind thereupon (we are seriously told) rose to a tempest, and threatened the destruction of the house. Dreadful moanings, as of someone in intense agony, were heard without, whilst a sense of horror seized upon all within. At the moment whilst the storm was highest, the wizard knocked at the door, and in piteous tones desired admittance.


They had previously been warned by the "wise man" whom they had consulted, that such would be the case, and had been charged not to yield to their feelings of humanity by allowing him to enter. Had they done so he would have regained all his influence, for the virtue of the spell would have been dissipated. Again and again did he implore them to open the door, but no one answered from within. At last the wizard had to cease his fruitless strivings, and had to retrace his steps across the moor as best he could. The spell, therefore, had its full effect, and within a week the wizard was locked in the cold embrace of death.

Similar stories are told of witchcraft and its accompanying superstitions in all lands. They are by no means confined to the Ribble Valley and its neighbourhood. In Africa, at the present day, among a primitive and simple-minded people, witches and wizards still maintain their sway. The reader who wishes to make further acquaintance with these silly and degrading beliefs is referred to Henderson's *Folk Lore of the North of England*, and to the Records of the Folk Lore Society.



A TRAMP ACROSS THE NAB FROM HARWOOD TO WHALLEY.

IV.—LANCASHIRE LANDSCAPES.—THE EVERLASTING GREEN-
NESS.—THE VILLAGE OR TOWN OF WHALLEY.—WHALLEY
CHURCH :—ITS MONUMENTS :—ITS *Misereres*.

FTER wandering at such length through the strange
mazes of witchcraft superstitions, and residing, in
imagination, for a time in a world where all seems topsy-
turvey, in which fear dominates, and all kinds of abominations
are committed in the august name of the law, one requires,
as it were, to rub one's eyes when one desires to take a
natural view of things, and to see what is going on around us
in the world of to-day. As I descend the Nab, on which I
am supposed to have been making my notes on a local
superstition, I notice that Whalley lies down below me, by
the side of that dirty Calder stream, which is a kind of open
cesspool and sewer. The day is very bright, however, and
lovely : the heavens are clear, and the white cumulus clouds
sail lazily aloft ; and there is around me here that wealth of
vegetation which hides, if I chose to allow it, that which

tends to mar and blur the fair landscape. Yonder towards Clitheroe a train is scudding along, and leaves its white ribbon of steam as a kind of pennon behind it. And everywhere is the fair spreading Valley of the Ribble, with its scores of towns and villages, and its hundreds of farmsteads, nestling warm in the valley, and looking cold and bleak and lonely near the hill tops. I am tempted to pause awhile and note the main characteristics of our East Lancashire scenery, which, I think, is very evident to the careful observer who has been up and down in England, and has seen in what particulars it differs from the landscapes of other counties.

There is, first of all, its bleak openness and exposure. All the hill sides are bleak, and they leave nothing unrevealed. They are not seamed by deep clefts, down the craggy depths of which rush streams of clear and limpid water, over rapid and cataract, in haste to join hands with the river or burn below. Wood also is lacking, and even the heather till you come to mount the tops of the highest hills. There are no rocky escarpments, as of a cliff by a sea shore, except where the hill sides have been worked for stone, either for building purposes or for the making of lime. On the road sides and in the fields there are no bowery hedges or plantations, behind and in which a regiment might hide itself and skirmish away, if war time were on. Therefore, you have few surprises, and there is a general alikeness which, in time, somewhat palls upon you. Even the villages, as I said before, partake of this nakedness, and one wishes they would put on the

clothing of front and back gardens, shrubberies, orchards, and plantations. Then there is no warm features about them: few brick buildings, and still fewer with red tiled roofs. Are there indeed any? Stone buildings necessarily look cold, and especially so when they are unrelieved by any ornament, or trailing and clinging greenery. And stone walls are not so picturesque in a landscape as good quick-thorn hedges, however the poet may soliloquise on their lichenised and mossy beauty. Stone, even in the artistic sense, seems cold and unrelenting, whilst the neatly-trimmed hedge speaks of imminent human care, and looks warmer, more adumbrous, and more pleasing.

Then there is the everlasting and unbroken greenness, an emerald sea, with mountains for billows, and towns and villages for sandbanks, rocks, and shoals. Everywhere green, and hardly a sign of gold or umber (as of upturned clay) in the landscape. No point of relief, save where the wood looks dark, where the shadows rest, that are thrown by the big arms of the sparse trees, holding out their wealth of summer foliage; and where the purple heather in autumn looks gorgeous in the sunshine.

I forget there are the full-bodied glorious rivers, and how rich is the Ribble Valley in these? There they wind along, now glancing in smooth pools, now rippling over gentle slopes, now chasing the banks of yielding loam, and now fretting at the base of rocks that hem them in in eddying reaches. How the waters leap the barriers imposed to their course by the uptilted strata of shales and other rocks, which

lie, in many cases, in straight lines across their path! I fancy a geologist might learn much by a careful study of the beds of the Ribble valley streams. The whole of the leaves of one volume of the rock book are at different points exposed to his view.

However, in descending upon Whalley it is not with the charms of nature that I have to deal, but with communal and social life, and I am reminded by the evidence of the monuments of a past age which border on the Calder stream, and stand for the most part all reft, and desolate, and broken, hardly one stone, as the Psalmist says, on the top of another, that it is no slight task I have undertaken to describe such a place. To treat it as a whole would exhaust my leisure and overcrowd this space, moreover books have already been written on the Abbey and the Parish of Whalley, and they have by no means exhausted the theme. I shall make no pretence, therefore, to write the history of the Parish and its great monastic church, except in the most sketchy and casual way, and I shall confine what I have to say mainly to the churchyard crosses—said to be of Paulinus, and to the ancient Parish Church of Whalley itself, a church, which, like all others in the Ribble Valley, in its present form, dates back mainly only so far as the Perpendicular epoch. The crosses are the most interesting objects to the mere “natural” as well as to the antiquarian, and I think I shall have little difficulty in proving to the candid and unbiassed reader that in some important respects previous writers have been in error in their descriptions of them, and in tracing

out their connection with certain defined epochs of our local history.

I am afraid I am not one attaching any great degree of importance to records of any kind that come to us from the fogs of antique time, before even a morning twilight had been let in upon the graveyards of a past civilization. Of course there must be antiquaries, and the subject of antiquities is not one without its charm to the student. It is a sphere, however, in which lying is shamelessly perpetrated, and in which blank obscurities are converted into suppositions, and these again into probabilities, and lastly into facts. A man may start as an antiquarian without serving any apprenticeship, and if he can only successfully dovetail his botches and bumbles together his work will pass off, even with learned persons, as very genuine. Now, I need not say there is no profession to which a man should serve so long and so devoted an apprenticeship as that of antiquary, that is if he is to speak with any degree of certainty, and to be listened to as one who has something worth hearing to say.

Whalley is not a populous place, and probably at no time was it much more so than it is now. It is situated near the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, and is six and a-half miles north-east of Blackburn. Considering its size and limited importance, in all cases except one, there is, perhaps, no parish in Lancashire that has had so much written about it. The parish is considered to be one of the most extensive in Lancashire, and formerly comprised that of Blackburn, Langho, and Salesbury, not to mention others. It is 100,000

acres in extent, and within its ancient bounds there were no fewer than 40 townships and over 150,000 inhabitants. The village consists almost entirely of one stone-paved street, though there are a few houses branching off towards the church, and a few villas in their own retired grounds along the Clitheroe road. It is not as yet much disfigured by manufactures. Where the railway crosses the Calder, a little below the town, a fine viaduct has been thrown over the valley, and, when seen from a distance, presents a variety of striking effects. In summer time the place is the resort of pleasure seekers and tourists, who come in thousands from Blackburn, Burnley, Clitheroe, and, indeed, all the Lancashire manufacturing towns, and from much more distant places. The spacious inns of the place afford every accommodation, and in most of the private houses refreshments can be had on the most moderate terms. The village itself is paved with "kidneys," and one writer alludes painfully to the *distraction* which these occasion in tickling the corns of the visitors, who may have had the ill-luck to venture out in a pair of thin-soled boots. He also thinks that it would be politic, on the part of the property owners and authorities, and those whose income so largely depends upon strangers, seeing that the visitors who come to the place annually exceed in number those frequenting a second-rate watering place, to add a little to "the conveniences" by substituting either setts or macadam for the hurtful cobbles, "of which the Pendle Bicycle Club, on a board

at the entrance of the village, charitably warns the public to beware."

Mentioning the provision made at Whalley for the physical requirements of visitors reminds me of one of the great peculiarities of this part of Lancashire, which speak to the stranger more than anything else of the near neighbourhood of great and populous communities, having not only the disposition but the means of periodically invading the country districts in great hordes, mainly on pleasure bent. In the most remote places in the Ribble Valley provision is made on an ample scale for supplying the visitor with refreshments. If he be a teetotaler he never need go inside a public-house to get the inner man replenished. There is no need for the tourist or the visitor to take his or her provision with them under the supposition that he or she will not be able to obtain a supply when they have arrived at the end of their journey. There is no district anywhere supplied with such an abundance of halting places, and with so many places of real refreshment, where the most suitable things necessary for satisfying the gastronomic wants can be had at more reasonable rates, and of better quality. They face you in all directions, not only in the villages, but by the road-sides, and in most lonely and unlikely places, where you would imagine that the foot of even the more adventurous visitor would hardly ever stray. The whole valley is evidently being opened out as a show-place for visitors, who swarm over it on the fine days of summer in search of change and health, just as bees swarm in search of honey. What a change will be effected in a hundred

years from now. Quite a large population is growing up in the neighbourhood of all the sights, who are largely, if not entirely, dependent upon the influx of summer visitors for the means of livelihood.

The great attractions of Whalley are, of course, its fine old church, and the ruins of what was once its grand old abbey. The church—not the present one, but its predecessor on the site—is undoubtedly one of the most ancient in the country; as we have seen, it is the mother church of a large and extensive district. Bishop Gastrell, in his *Notitia Cestriensis*, according to Dobson, attributes its foundation to St. Augustine, and says that in his day this was the popular tradition. He gives the date of the foundation as A.D. 596. There is, of course, little reliance to be placed in these figures, and there is no record whatever of St. Augustine having ever been in the immediate district. Dr. Whitaker, and other writers blindly following him, are inclined to adopt the hypothesis—it is nothing more—that the first Whalley church owed its existence to Paulinus, the missionary of the north, who is said to have preached in Yorkshire and Lancashire, causing many churches to be erected, and was said to have been consecrated Archbishop of York on the revival of that See by St. Edwin, King of Northumberland, in 627. In the churchyard are three undoubtedly ancient Runic crosses, which, by a recent tradition, have been erected in honour of his preaching there. At one time the church appears to have been called “The White Church under the Leigh,” and it is said that the earliest priests were called

deans, and that the office of dean was hereditary, as celibacy was not then a *sine quâ non* of priesthood in connection with the Church of Rome. The first Dean of Whalley was Sparltingus, and, we are told, the deanery remained in his descendants' possession until early in the thirteenth century, when the marriage of ecclesiastics was forbidden by the Lateran Council. The dean subsequently became rector, and ultimately vicar. It was during the incumbency of the first and only rector, Peter de Cestria, that the church was appropriated by Henry de Lacy, the lord of Blackburnshire, to the Abbey of Stainlaw, in Cheshire, the monks of which afterwards migrated to the fairer valley of Whalley, and erected the noble abbey, whose fine ruins yet add so much of melancholy beauty to the banks of the Calder.

After occupying Stanlaw, proceeds Dobson, for a hundred and eighteen years, the monks, in April, 1296, removed to Whalley, erected the abbey, and, as patrons of the church, like too many lay patrons of church livings in the present day, received the lion's share of the church's income, a state of things which still exists, when the abbey's share of the inheritance has passed into laymen's hands. A long series of vicars have now enjoyed the living, some learned and pious, some illiterate and vicious, and a few obnoxious on charges of licentious living, which marked the times when the great Reformation was going on, and for long after that important change in the established religion. Bishop Pilkington, writing to the Archbishop of Canterbury, said on one occasion, "Whalley hath as ill a vicar as the rest." Indeed, this "ill

vicar" (the Rev. George Dobson) appears to have been unlike his neighbour and contemporary Sir Thomas Cottam, the Longridge priest, who was "no tippler." On the contrary, he was on one occasion "presented" to the bishop for frequenting public-houses, and in the presentment it was stated that he was accustomed on such occasions, when inebriated, to dance before the company with a full cup of liquor upon his head. Rather an unclerical amusement, says Dobson, and then, with a sense of sly humour he observes, "in one sense at least he must have been a steady man."

It has ever been the case in the history of the Church that the cause of religion has been marred by the conduct of those who have been its ministers and leading professors. It was so before the Reformation, and it was so afterwards; and *sicut erat in principio*, for human nature both in laymen and cleric must ever produce the same fruits. Shakspeare had a great respect for the cloth, and, unlike Chaucer, tells us very little of the doings of the parsons or "personnes of his day," except in the case of the holy friars; but Green, a contemporary writer, says sufficient to show us that they were not after the scriptural pattern of the saints, and without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Speaking of official and professional religion in his day he says:

"God wot, her garments are but loosely tucked,"
and much as may be urged to the contrary, in all probability there never was a time when the lives of the clergy would bear such close scrutiny as they will in the present day. And the causes of this improvement are not

far to seek. Public opinion is a much more potent force than it was in the old centuries. Its judgments are more searching ; its insight is more keen ; and its penalties are more punitive. The nineteenth century tolerates no laxity on the part of those who minister at the altars of the church. There never was an age that was more exacting and Puritanic than the present, so far as the laity are concerned ; or when the clergy were outwardly, at least, more moral and circumspect. In these times short shrift would be made with a drunken vicar of Whalley ; and a jolly friar would be regarded as one of the social abominations of the epoch. Decidedly the standard of clerical life is higher, and, with the press, the telegraph, and the railway, letting light in on dark places, acting as the leaders and guides of parochial opinion and life, what village parson would now-a-days think of playing mountebank in a common tap-room, and going through a jig in the presence of his parishioners with a full cup of liquor on his head !

Resuming our Dobson, we learn that formerly the parish of Whalley was worthy the dignity of its earlier ecclesiastical lords, for it extended over an area of no less than 400 square miles—was indeed a little kingdom in itself. Over all these broad acres the monks exacted their tithe, if they were not wholly the lords of the soil. We can form little idea now of the position of the church in these days, for the religious orders seemed to have owned almost every rook that flew in the heavens and every fish that swam in the rivers ; or, which was the same thing, they took toll of

those who presumed to share the fatness of the land with them. The church then was far more a material than a spiritual power.

“Entering the church,” says Dobson, “which, for many reasons, is so interesting, I could not but in the first place reverently contemplate the monument erected within the communion rails to the late learned vicar of Whalley, Dr. T. D. Whitaker, an author whose writings have afforded me many hours’ interesting reading, whose researches have done more than any other man’s to illustrate the history of Lancashire and Yorkshire, and whose labours will be appreciated and whose memory will be honoured so long as a taste for history and antiquities endures. His *Histories of Whalley, of Craven, and of Richmondshire* are monuments of patient research, laborious study, profound erudition, and classical taste. Although there is appropriately a memorial within Whalley Church to one who had preached within its walls, who had done so much for the history of the church, the abbey, and the parish, and who had taught and advised throughout the parish, his remains rest in the family vault in Holme Chapel, adjoining his ancestral home. By his own directions his coffin was formed of a larch tree grown on the Holme estate of his own planting.

“There are within Whalley Church several monuments to the memory of different members of the Whalley, Braddyll, Taylor, Brooks, and other local families. On one monument, to the memory of Elizabeth, first wife of James Whalley, Esq., of Clerk Hill, afterwards Sir James Whalley-Smythe-Gardiner,

Bart., there are the following elegant lines, by the late accomplished headmaster of Clitheroe Grammar School, the Rev. T. Wilson, B.D. :—

‘Here sleeps Eliza ! let the marble tell
 How young, how sudden, and how dear she fell ;
 How blest and blessing in the nuptial tie,
 How form’d for every gentle sympathy !
 Her life, by Heaven approv’d, by earth admir’d,
 Amidst the brightest happiness expir’d ;
 And left an husband fix’d in grief to mourn,
 Widow’d of all her virtue, o’er her urn ;
 Yet, while he feels and bends beneath the rod,
 Meek Resignation lifts his eye to God,
 And shews within the blest eternal sphere
 The partner of his bosom sainted there :
 He bows, and breathes, so faith has trained her son,
 Great Sovereign of the world, Thy will be done.’

“Among the other memorials of the departed there is a gravestone, which cannot fail to be viewed with great interest. It is the one which Dr. Whitaker conjectured to be over the tomb of John Paslew, the last Abbot of Whalley, who was hanged for his share in the Pilgrimage of Grace, a revolutionary movement against Henry the Eighth, and which had for its principal object the restoration of the Roman Catholic religion. No one can stand on the tomb without a feeling of pity for its occupant. When I come to speak of Whalley Abbey, I shall have a little to say about poor John Paslew. The tomb has on it a large floriated cross and a representation of a chalice and paten, typical of his sacred profession, and

the humble and prayerful inscription : ‘ *Jhs. [Jesus] fili Dei misereri mei.*’ There has long been a tradition in Whalley that if ever an Assheton or a Braddyll stood on Paslew’s grave he would die within the year. Richard Assheton and John Braddyll were the purchasers of the Abbey and its lands after the dissolution of the monasteries, and this saying has been cherished in the neighbourhood amongst those who had a kindly feeling for the old faith and its professors, and little love for those who had been guilty of sacrilegious traffic in the property of the church. Of this saying Harrison Ainsworth makes a thrilling use in his novel of *The Lancashire Witches*. I do not know that ever an instance occurred of death punishing either an Assheton or Braddyll for standing over Paslew’s dust, although I am told that many an Assheton has walked along the north aisle, and, of course, over the unfortunate abbot’s grave, without suffering for his temerity. There is also the tomb of Christopher Smith, the last prior of Whalley, bearing a floriated cross and the letters X. S. (Christopher Smith). There is also one asking for prayers for the soul of its occupant, Thomas Lawe, a monk. In his History of Whalley, Dr. Whitaker, alluding to the Mitton Chapel, on the north aisle of the church, says, ‘Within or adjoining to the north chapel was a brass plate, with the figures of a man and a woman kneeling before a desk. Behind the father were nine sons, and behind the mother eleven daughters. Beneath was this inscription (in old English characters): ‘Of your charitie pray for the soules of Raphe Catterall, Esquire, and Elizabeth, his wyff,

and for all their childrens soules, which Raphe deceased the xx day of Decr., 1515, and of whose soules Jesu have mercie. —Amen.’ The plate was in the possession of Robert Sherbourne, of Mitton, esq., in 1659, and is now lost.’ Between his publication of the last edition of the History of Whalley (A.D. 1818), and the issue of the History of Richmondshire (A.D. 1823), the doctor met with the missing plate, and in the latter work, in his account of the parish of Garstang, he says:—‘In the neighbouring house of Catteral (Catteral Hall, near Garstang), which stands on the site of the ancient house of the Catterals, I found a brass plate, of which the account given is that it was dug up in the church yard of Garstang (Churchtown). However that may be, it is the identical plate, transcribed by Dugdale, in the church of Whalley, and recording Raphe Catteral, of this place, and of Little Mitton, Esquire, and Elizabeth, his wife, with the figures of twenty children, nine sons behind the father and eleven daughters behind the mother. It is difficult to conjecture how it came to be removed hither, but the names, the date, and every circumstance about it, identify it with that which is known to have existed at Whalley, where Raphe Catteral is known to have been interred, having died at his manor of Little Mitton. It has since been restored to its original situation in Whalley Church.’ The late Dowager Lady Shelley, the then owner of Catteral Hall, where it had been for time out of mind, presented the plate to the late Dr. Whitaker, who was anxious to restore it to its original place in his church, and where it now is, a curious specimen

of the monuments of its era. There are a few other small monumental brasses, including one to the memory of a former vicar of the parish, the Rev. Stephen Gey, who died in 1693. The hearthstone in the vestry is an ornamental tombstone, doubtless of some ecclesiastic of rank, but in whose memory can only be conjectured. It cannot be much less than six hundred years old. A curious feature of Whalley Church are the carved oaken stalls in the chancel, which were brought hither from Whalley Abbey, at the spoliation of the abbey church. They are eighteen in number. On the 'miserere' of the principal one, the abbot's seat, is the inscription, in old English characters :— 'Semper gaudentes sint ista sede sedentes.' (Ever gladsome may they be who occupy this seat.) Besides this inscription and certain ornamentation, including 'a wreath of vine, enriched with clusters of grapes, emblems of the plenty and good cheer attached to his office,' the seat contains the initials 'W. W.' (William Whalley, the eighth abbot of Whalley). The good wishes inscribed on the seat were not fully realised by all his successors. In a hundred and two years after William Whalley's death, the last abbot was swinging on the gallows, the sacred establishment was broken up, and many of the inmates had become vagrants. The seats of the other stalls are more or less carved. On one is a satyr making love to a rustic beauty, who rewards his tears with laughter and makes merry at his suit ; on another is a representation of a woman beating her husband, who is on his knees before her, with a ladle. 'These,' says Dr. Whitaker, 'perhaps

might be intended to console the monks for the privations of love and marriage." On another, and it is perhaps the most curious in the lot, is a man represented shoeing a goose, and there is also the following couplet in old English characters:—

"Who so melles hy: of yt: al me: dos,
let hy: cu heir and shoe ye ghos."

Whoso meddles (troubles) himself of (with) that all men do, let him come here and shoe the goose—a hint that persons who meddle in other men's business are engaged in as useless or as unsatisfactory work as shoeing a goose.



A TRAMP ACROSS THE NAB FROM HARWOOD TO WHALLEY.

V.—WHALLEY CHURCH RENOVATED.—PEWS BEFORE THE
REFORMATION.—THE CHURCH A SHOW PLACE.—THE
WHALLEY ROOD SCREEN AND ROOD SCREENS IN
GENERAL.—THE RUNIC CROSSES OF WHALLEY.

DOBSON speaks, and not without reason, most feelingly and appreciatively, of the beauty of the interior of Whalley Church. Whilst speaking of the carved work he does not omit to notice the large pew which in more than one instance has been the cause of dispute and litigation in the parish. This pew is situate on the left hand side of the nave looking from the chancel, and divided into two parts. It belongs, according to Whitaker, to the Manor of Hapton, and was constructed prior to the Reformation. The question was long disputed in the *British Critic* whether pews existed anterior to the Reformation, and the matter was only set at rest by the following award. A dispute having arisen on account of sittings in this church, Sir John Townley, as the principal man in the parish, was sent to decide it, when, in

giving his award, he made use of the following remarkable words:—"My man Shuttleworth, of Hacking, made this form, and here will I sit when I come, and my cousin Nowell may make one behind me if he pleases—[this is the exact relative situation of the two pews at present]—and my sonne Sherburne shall make one on the other side, and Mr. Catteral another behind him; and for the residue the use shall be, first come first speed, and that will make the proud wives of Whalley rise betimes to come to church." How the "proud wives" of Whalley relished the remark is not stated, but, doubtless, they would not feel over grateful to Sir John for the allusion. While on the subject of pews, I could not but notice with regret that St. Mary's chapel, in the south aisle, is occupied by a lot of modern pews, positively disfiguring that portion of the sacred edifice. In Canon Raine's notes to Bishop Gastrell's "*Notitia Cestriensis*," the learned editor says "that it was [in 1850] proposed to substitute oak benches instead of the unsightly modern pews which now disfigure it." It is to be regretted that this good resolution has not yet been carried out.

It is a fact worth noticing, says Whitaker, that the pew of the Nowell's was placed in the situation allotted to it by Sir John Townley, but not for upwards of 120 years afterwards. This magnificent old pew, belonging to the Manor of Read, has this inscription upon it, in mixed letters, which are somewhat difficult to decipher: "*Factum est per Rogerum Nowell, Armigerum, Anno Domini MCCCCXXXIV.*" Roger was brother to Dr. Alexander Nowell, Dean of St. Paul's.

The open work of the pew, containing the letters R.M.R. and the date 1690, is beautifully carved, in the perpendicular style. There was a story current some years ago, that when Roger Nowell brought this pew down from Read to be put up in the church, Sir John Assheton, then resident in Whalley Abbey, positively refused to allow it to be placed there. Rather than take it back to Read, Mr. Nowell put it in a barn at Nethertown, where it remained for 70 years, after which period, the Assheton's becoming absentees and not so particular, his descendants quietly brought it into its present place, where it has remained ever since undisturbed.

While enumerating objects worthy of notice, Dr. Whitaker calls attention to the font of the church, which, he says, is a remarkably pure specimen of its kind. It is composed of the yellow grit stone of the country, the same as the stone of the pillars of the church, and was probably brought from the township of Read. It is octagonal, typical of the eight persons of Noah's family, "saved in the ark from perishing by water," and is placed, according to due order, near the entrance to the church.

In close proximity to the font is the wardens' pew, with the eight separate seats for the churchwardens of the townships of Whalley, Wiswell, Read, Hapton, Henthorne, &c., and on the outside of the pew are carved the initials of each warden upon two shields, with the date 1690. The seat at the west end of the south nave belongs to the vicarage, where the vicars formerly sat on Easter Tuesdays to receive their Easter-dues. The tombstone on the floor, near this pew, is that of Prior Smith.

All the windows of the body of the church are modern, excepting the one near the stairs, leading to the organ gallery. The old ones were formerly filled in with stained glass, as Mr. Thomas Talbot, of Bashall, mentions, but these have long since been destroyed. There is a beautiful memorial window in the south aisle, by Pugin, to the late Mr. Brooks, placed there by his son, the late Mr. Samuel Brooks. The figures inserted are those of the Virgin, St. Anne, and St. John. The opposite window, also beautiful, by Hardman, was given by Mr. William Cunliffe Brooks, M.P., in memory of his father and mother. The subject is the Offering of the Magi, and the original window on the gallery stairs is by the same artist, Hardman, and was placed there by Mr. C. Brooks, in memory of his aunt. There is also, near the Braddyll seat, a window to the memory of the Rev. George Preston, B.D., many years the successful master of the Royal Grammar School. In St. Nicholas Chapel a memorial window has also been inserted by Mrs. Fort to her late husband, Mr. Richard Fort, of Read Hall.

Speaking of the condition of the edifice, and the steps taken towards its renovation, Dobson says, on page 21 of his *Rambles*, "In my account of Mitton Church I alluded to the restoration of the edifice from the effects of generations of tasteless churchwardens tampering with it. Whalley is even a more striking instance of the beauty of a fabric concealed for years but now restored. Indeed, it was the accidental discovery of the sealed-up roof at Whalley Church, and the improvement effected by removing the plaster and whitewash

from the roof and the pillars that caused the work at Mitton to be undertaken. Now this church is open to the rafters, and a fine oak roof it is : and those who had only seen the church before the removal of the plain, flat ceiling, which both nave and chancel had in Dr. Whitaker's time [see the engraving in the *History of Whalley*, third edition], could scarcely recognise the sacred edifice, so much improved is it by the restoration. As respects the edifice itself, of course no portion of the first church, the White Church under the Leigh, is in existence : the present building is of various periods, from the latter portion of the thirteenth century till shortly before the Reformation. As at Mitton, there are the sedilia and piscina, reminding one of ante-Reformation days, and there is also a very ancient font. The east window, during Dr. Whitaker's incumbency, was filled with stained glass, bearing the armorial emblazonments of the ancient and modern families connected with the district, and it gives an agreeable finish to the chancel. Many of the improvements in the church were carried out by the late worthy inhabitant of Whalley, who also gave the organ to the church, who presented a fine picture of Our Saviour, by Northcote, for an altar piece, and whose purse and services were ever, in his day, at the disposal of the inhabitants of the village. His portrait is in the vestry of the church, but I cannot but again express the great regret expressed by me, thirty years ago in the *Preston Chronicle*, in an account of a visit to Whalley, that no memorial in honour of the Whalley worthy graces the walls of the church to whose beauty he so much added.

Though nearly forty years have elapsed since his death, it is not too late to put up a monument to Adam Cottam. Before I leave the church, which, with the exception of an unsightly gallery which was allowed to be erected above fifty years since, is one of the most beautiful in the county, I must notice that the registers of the parish are of very ancient date, commencing in the very year the act directing the establishment of parish registers was passed, 1538. The churchwarden's accounts also go back to early in the seventeenth century, and contain many curious items illustrative of the customs of that period. There are many charges for mending the 'yates and steels' [gates and styles], for until the time of Dr. Whitaker the church-yard was not enclosed, it had several roads through it, and was a receptacle for refuse; but through his efforts it was enclosed, and preserved in decency and order, and the present fine trees which add so much to the beauty of the yard, were planted by him. There are also payments for 'whipping dogs' out of the church and church-yard, for with defective 'yates and steels' it was usual, in those days, to have a dog-whipper stationed at many church porches during divine service to drive off canine intruders. There were many charges for 'mossing' the church, that is, roofing it with moss. Whalley being a large parish, the churchwardens had often to travel, and their expenses, usually very moderate, are duly entered. In 1647, when the churchwardens had to come to Preston to see 'the committee,' who sat here to regulate ecclesiastical matters, during the time of the Commonwealth, there is an entry of

1s. 4d. being paid for a 'quart of sack for the committee,'—the warden having, doubtless, found that his business with the committee was facilitated by his 'standing treat' for them. In the seventeenth century there are frequent entries of the cost of wine for the sacrament, six quarts being usually got at a time, the charge being generally 1s., but sometimes 10d. a quart. Manchets [cakes of fine wheat flour for the sacrament] were charged a penny each.'

These papers, for brevity's sake, are headed "A tramp across the Nab from Harwood to Whalley," but in reality they are the outcome of several tramps. It would be impossible to understand so interesting an edifice, and one so crowded with memorials of a varying past, as Whalley Church, by merely paying it a single visit. The Church is a kind of museum, and we noticed that the clerk or verger utilises it strictly as a show place. The door is never open. Why? The moment a party is taken in the door is locked on the inside, and later comers have to wait until the business-minded caretaker deems it fit to open it, and let them in. Judging by what we have seen on several visits, the rural Barnum must make a decent income from the "tips" he receives. It is high time the place were thrown open, and treated not as a show, but as a House of God—a sacred fane wherein countless generations have worshipped their Maker; which is replete with the most sacred memories and associations; and which has been the spiritual home of the simple minded villagers for many centuries.

Dobson speaks as though the church had been fully restored, but this is by no means the case. The hideous gallery which renders the interior so dull and unsightly should at once be taken down. The curious dormer windows, let in or rather brought out from between the clerestorey lights, are by no means a portion of the original edifice. They are very quaint, but they are not in keeping with the style of the rest of the building. The unsightly pews, with the exception of those which are really historic, should be taken out and replaced by neat oaken benches. Exteriorly, too, the building needs much dressing up, and presents an uncared for appearance. The down comer, we noticed in one instance, had no receptacle into which to pour its waters, and these would necessarily find their way into the foundations of the building. A good architect would have no difficulty in converting the place into a perfect shrine. In its present condition it is largely an eye-sore ; a lovely gem lost for want of a proper setting and reverential care.

I am nothing if not gossipy. Therefore a few words of explanation in a gossipy way. When I commenced these papers I had no more idea than an unborn child that anything would happen to interrupt their even course ; that their even tenour would be invaded by any pure mechanic accident. I had indeed imagined that if, like Tennyson's brook they could not "go on for ever," there was at least the possibility that they might meander for many months through these columns in an unbroken course. Suddenly, however,

a marriage that nobody had anticipated would ever take place, was consummated ; the *Standard* and the *Express* ran away together to Gretna Green, and for a short space there was, in a literary sense, nothing but confusion worse confounded. What with the shifting of quarters : the setting up of the newly-married couple in life : the engagement of new servants ; and the fright that the sudden nuptials occasioned in some quarters, is it to be wondered at that for a time my pen, my imagination, and even my functions were suspended ? Good old Charles Lamb, in his own inimitable way, has told us what are the manifold evils of shifting or flitting, and after my recent experiences I can well believe him. My nerves have been wholly unsettled by it, and though I am quite delighted to see the young couple so happy—they bill and coo all the day long—I cannot say that I have quite settled down to their domestic arrangements. Be that as it may, the chief butler, which in this case means the editor, kindly permits me once more to put myself in evidence in my new quarters, where I trust the reader will not fail to make my acquaintance as in the old time, and to derive some amount of profit from my road-side jottings by church and hall, by castle and rock, by field and moor, and by woodland and stream.

When I “broke off” in my discursive paper, the reader and I had made together a cursory examination of the old Church at Whalley. Already I have lingered about that ancient fabric for days, being anxious not only to duly assess its history and architectural features, but to drink in somewhat of the sermons that ray out and exhale from its cold grey

stones. It is a beautiful and complete sanctuary, and might be much more beautiful and complete, and I say it not in wrath or in a censorious spirit, if it were in more reverent hands. How it breathes to us of the past, and of holy associations, in its carven wood and burnished brass, its gleaming lights, its oaken pinnacle, its grotesque miserere; its religious gloom, its sepulchral monuments. Its ancient rood loft is still almost complete, and divides the chancel, a more sacred place, from the body of the church, the nave, in which assemble on Sunday and holyday the merely laical worshippers. There is a strange beauty about these ancient screens, and therefore I may be permitted to discourse upon them, more or less practically, more or less learnedly.

The screen at Whalley is of ante-reformation date. It escaped alike, with the beautiful tabernacle work of the choir and the stalls, the fierce valour of the church robbers of King Henry's time, and the destroying zeal of the Church desecrators who followed "brave Oliver," when he went abroad in the land. Generally throughout England in the Reformation times so-called, Rood Screens were torn down, because it was believed that they ministered to superstitious uses, and there are therefore not many remaining that are more complete than this of Whalley. In the times of Elizabeth and the Charleses, and notably in the times of Archbishop Laud, rood screens were again set up, though without the surmounting cross and crucifix which were supposed to promote the "sin of idolatry." I have seen many such in different parts of the country, but they are very poor and tame as works of art,

compared with those which were erected during the middle ages. They were open and heavy structures, not without a certain peculiarity of style which was pleasing ; but the rood screens of the Gothic times were the perfection of the carver's art, and were light and æriel and admirably adapted for the purpose for which they were intended. They screened, without hiding, the choir and the officiants in the chancel, and they added that piquant mystery to the functions and services which went on in the chancel, which made them more attractive than they would have been if fully revealed. In order to test this, one has only to be present at a modern Mass, where the chancel is open to the nave, and where, as a mere function, one cannot but notice that the service is raw if not irreverent ; and bald, and bare, and cold ; every minute gesture being observable, and to the unaccustomed and critical mind conveying that sense of incompleteness and of restlessness which is hardly conducive to devotion.

The rood itself, which was the cross, in all the old churches was generally placed above the loft. It was large and very evident. It contained a representation of the Son of God reigning on the tree. He was crowned, and bore upon His Person all the marks of suffering so realistically portrayed as could not fail to be offensive to the healthy modern mind. Near to this would be placed the figure of St. John or the Virgin, one on either side, though this rule was not always followed. Some of the rood beams—that is the cornice of oak timber stretching from side to side of the chancel—bore suitable inscriptions in the Latin tongue, something like that which

has been placed on the modern rood beam in St. Mary's, Aberdeen, as follows :—

Effigium Christi dum transis pronus honora,
Sed non effigiem sed Quem designat adora.

The presence of attendant figures on the rood is said to date from the fifteenth century. The lines I have quoted are stated by Weever in his *Funeral Monuments* to have been placed “under the picture of Christ usually in all Abbey Churches,” and he gives besides an interesting series of other such inscriptions, “cut, painted, or engraven,” “upon the walls, pillars, and other places of all Churches,” before they were “defaced, erased, washed over, or obliterated.” Another inscription which was often seen on these roods was the following Latin distich, of which also I give a free translation :—

Nam Deus est, quod imago docet, sed non Deus ipse,
Hanc videas, sed mente colas quod cernis in ipsâ.

This image teaches thee of God,
Though here no God is seen,
Look on the form, but worship
What thy soul discerns unseen.

A similar rood screen to that at Whalley exists at Ribchester, but it is not *in situ*, but has been converted into a stately pew for the lord of the manor or other notable person. Mr. Benham, in his excellent dictionary, says that everywhere throughout England “most of the roods have been removed. He might have said all, for even in those cases in which the screens have not been taken from their places and destroyed, there is no vestige of the crucifix remaining, and I do not know that in modern roods, except perhaps in Roman Catholic

Churches, any attempt has been made to resuscitate the ancient custom, or place once more aloft the ancient *Icon*, and personally I must say that much as I like the screen in large churches, I much prefer the modern usage


I have often felt during the course of these notes how incomplete necessarily they are in form, and how little able am I to comprehend in them all the subjects upon which it would seem necessary to treat. Whalley Church is like an ancient book of many pages in an almost unknown tongue, and which has never yet been fully translated and transcribed. One might linger around it for days and weeks without exhausting all that it has to tell us of a past art, a past religion, a past mode of life. Every stone and pillar, every carving and boss, has its own legend. Were I to pretend to elucidate one half the problems to which its antique features give rise, the purport of these papers would not be met, and I should have the casual reader turning aside with a weary yawn, and with a notion that, having been invited to a chatty talk, on rural scenes, I had sat him down to dine off the dry bones of Domesday. So with regret, we must tip our sexton and mentor, clear out with him and see him bang to the door, bolting it and and barring it on the inside, for no sooner are we let out, than he has another batch of visitors in his charge—may I say clutches—and to them he will recount the glories of the historic pile for the customary fee.

How the times have changed, and how the manners. Formerly a sanctuary and a shrine; now a pleasure resort and a show!

Ah, well. Let us find comfort once more in the hundred pages of William Dobson, who quaintly tells us that outside the church are many interesting features. A stone coffin, says he, and a fine floriated (incised) cross have been turned up since Dr. Whitaker's day, and are now in the yard. A quern, or Roman hand corn mill, for Whalley was the site of a minor Roman station, has also been found. The most interesting objects, however, are the three stone crosses, which, there is no doubt, are of the sixth, or very early in the seventh century, and were erected to commemorate the preaching of St. Paulinus, the apostle of the North. Crosses in commemoration of St. Paulinus's preaching are in the churchyards of Burnley, Dewsbury and Ilkley; while in other parts of the country are similar memorials of the first planting of Christianity by others of the early missionaries. Much of the ornamentation on the crosses, as might be expected, has become defaced by an exposure of twelve hundred years to the weather, but there is much of interest remaining about them, and no one can look without feelings of the most affectionate interest, at the representatives of the greatest event in the annals of the North of England. Respecting these crosses, on one occasion they suffered, as so many other ancient memorials of Christianity did, from the frenzied zeal of the Puritans; but fortunately, while so many other monuments of the past were destroyed or lost, the Whalley crosses are no worse for their temporary displacement from their ancient site.

A TRAMP ACROSS THE NAB FROM HARWOOD TO WHALLEY.

VI.—CHURCHYARD AND RUNIC CROSSES.—A WHOLE CHAPTER
ABOUT PAULINUS AND THE CHRISTIAN SYMBOL.—THE
PRINTER'S APOLLYON.—THE CROSSES ANGLO-NORMAN.
—CLOSING REMARKS.

URING the Commonwealth, continues Dobson, Dr. Webster, a noted writer on witchcraft, surgery, and other matters, and, says Dr. Whitaker, "one of the ablest and most learned that have been connected with the parish of Whalley," during a zealous crusade against superstitious relics, headed a party who removed the three crosses from their site in the churchyard, and appropriated them "as a boundary fence for some adjoining fields." After the Restoration, and when his religious views had become sobered and settled, he is said, in an eager desire to atone for the desecration of which he had been guilty, to have purchased the crosses from the person who was then in possession of them, and to have been at the cost of re-erecting them on their present sites, from which no sacrilegious hand will, I trust, ever again remove them.



Runic Cross in Whalley Churchyard.

The most interesting objects in the churchyard of Whalley are undoubtedly the three runic crosses, which are of ancient date, and anterior to anything of an architectural or ornamental character which exists in the neighbourhood. Every writer who has hitherto alluded to these crosses has coupled them with the name of the great missionary of the north, St. Paulinus. It may therefore be wise for me to examine what evidence history and tradition furnishes on this head, prefacing what I have gleaned and have to say on the subject, by the remark that these venerable vestiges of antiquity have an interest to the churchman and the antiquary far transcending that of the ancient ecclesiastical fabrics with which the valley of the Ribble is studded, unique and unquestionably beautiful as many of them are.

Turning to page twenty-five of Abram's *History of Blackburn*, I find the writer there gives us, in a brief epitome, some account of the history and work of St. Paulinus. "It is probable," he says, "that before the relinquishment of the land by the Romans, the Christian religion had made its way to our shores, and had been embraced by no small proportion of the native populations. But the appearance of the Saxons and Angles, Pagans of the most ferocious type, extinguished the nascent faith in those districts of the country over which their power extended. In the time of King Edwin, a fresh movement took place for the evangelisation of Britain. Pope Gregory the Great, on his accession, sent to England forty missionaries, under the charge of Augustine. Edwin, King of Northumbria, having espoused Edilberga,

daughter of Ethelbert, the Kentish King, a Christian princess, embraced the same faith, and when his queen set out for the Northumbrian Court she was accompanied by Paulinus, a zealous missionary of the Roman Church. A.D. 627 Paulinus was consecrated archbishop of Northumbria, and Christianity became the state religion of the northern Angles. The king, with all his nobles, was baptised at York on Easter Sunday, 627, and the common people of the Anglican race, following the royal example, adopted the Christian name in great numbers. It is recorded that no fewer than 10,000 converts were baptised at one time by Paulinus. The inhabitants of Lancashire listened to the preaching of Paulinus, and accepted the new faith. Churches were planted in various parts of the country. In the Hundred of Blackburn, Paulinus prosecuted his propaganda with great success, and the mother church of the district was founded by him at Whalley, about the year 625. In the churchyard of Whalley are seen interesting monuments of the memorable event of the introduction of Christianity here, in the three antique crosses *which are believed to have been erected in the time of Paulinus*, and probably by his direction. There is a tradition that twelve Saxon castles were reared in the part of Lancashire south of the Ribble during Edwin's reign. The sites of these castles are placed at Whalley and Walton (in this district), at Childwall, Winwick, Blackstone, Sephton, Standish, Penwortham, Wigan, Rochdale, Middleton, and Bury. Edwin, first Christian king of Northumbria, was killed in battle, A.D. 633, and his kingdom spoiled. Paulinus died in the year 644."

The italics in the above extract are my own. The number of years intervening between the consecration of Paulinus as archbishop and his death are seventeen. St. Augustine landed in England about 596, and when he arrived here found an indigenous British Church. One of his first controversies was with the native Welsh bishops as to certain doctrines and rites of the British church, and at the time of his death, early in the seventh century, he had not succeeded in his object of converting them to an allegiance to the Roman see. We have no date given as to the time when the marriage of Edwin to the southern Princess took place, or we should be able to form a good idea of the number of years Paulinus was resident in the north, for the chronicle distinctly states that he came hitherward in Edilberga's train. A proper exactitude in these matters is essential if we wish to arrive at historic truth, for in this way we should be able of ourselves to judge the probable extent and scope of the labours of the great missionary. It is also well to remark, in passing, that he, too, like St. Augustine, would find himself face to face with a native Christian society, with its own worship, its own sacred buildings and altars, and its own memorials and monuments of the Christian faith. For the present, however, it will be best for us to note what other writers have said on the subject of Whalley's ancient crosses, and first let us give what Dr. Whitaker has himself to say upon the subject. He prefaces his account with the well-known lines from Moore :—

"Those lovely columns stand sublime,
Flinging their shadows from on high,

Like dials, which the wizard Time,
Had raised to count his ages by."

When we come, he says, to the three curious *Saxon* Crosses of the churchyard, we arrive within historical times, as they have always been associated with Paulinus, Archbishop of York, and his *multitudinous baptisms in the river Calder*. We are assured that the personal ministry of Paulinus was not immediately succeeded by Churches and oratories, so that the first church here might not be erected during his ministry ; but, though churches were not forthwith erected on the site of memorable events, crosses were, and there is authority for saying, where there were crosses, there the clergy and the people assembled together for the purpose of devotion, and even for celebrating the Holy Communion. This practice, in all probability, prevailed here for a century before the erection of any church. It was always said that Paulinus baptised several thousands of pagans in the river Calder, on the south side of the churchyard, as he had done previously in the river Tees, near Richmond in Yorkshire and that the crosses commemorate this event, and are named after him.

. . . . The Christian religion came here probably from Ribchester. The pagan people of this district were perhaps acquainted with the form of the cross before Paulinus preached here, because Constantine the Great and other emperors caused crosses to be erected at various points along the great Roman highways, thus supplanting the gods of polytheism by the symbol of Christianity. The early missionaries, anxious to win their pagan auditors to the Christian faith,

impressed the symbol of the cross upon the pillar stones, which already stood on the road sides, or in places where they had assembled for the purposes of their superseded religion. In illustration of this a small cross was found in 1866—two feet high, with some Roman coins under it—at Eccleshill near Guide, on the direct line of the old Roman road from Ribchester to Manchester. The sculptures on many of the Roman crosses were obviously intended to afford illustrations of Our Saviour, and, in like manner, the most prominent one in the churchyard here has a rude figure of I.H.S. carved in the most honourable part of the cross. The early Britons were celebrated for basket-making; their houses, doors, and even fortifications were made of willows and reeds; and although the lower parts of our crosses are so defaced by weather and by time, yet it is almost possible to trace that curious interlacing basket-work pattern, so common in many old manuscripts. To such a perfection had they brought the art of basket-making, that the great pro-consuls and Roman generals took from York and other British cities, specimens of it to adorn their palaces, as samples of the beautiful work of the barbarians. Tradition says that these crosses were buried by friendly hands in the time of the Puritans, but dug up again when the reign of the Iconoclasts was over. They were finally buttressed up and strengthened on their foundations by Dr. Whitaker, and no interments are now permitted near them. Dedication crosses were not uncommon. One occurs in Salisbury Cathedral on the exterior of the building, in brass, inserted in the wall. The meaning

of these crosses was, "first as a terror to evil spirits, that they having been driven from thence, may be terrified when they see the sign of the cross, and may not presume to enter there again. Secondly, as a mark of triumph, for crosses be the banners of Christ, and the sign of His triumph. Thirdly, that such as look at them may call to mind the passion of Christ, by which He hath consecrated His church, and their relief in His passion!"

In the final day of reckoning, I should prefer not to stand in the shoes of that personage who is called in printers' phraseology a compositor; which is the euphonic name of the type setter. Last week this interesting friend of culture omitted to correct the fag end of my proof. He had garnished that fag end with certain little embellishments of his own. Probably from his point of view they were improvements upon my own "English as she is wrote." He may be a dabbler in Eastern dialects. Any way, if he had attempted the construction of a new Cretan labyrinth for my special delectation he could not have succeeded better than he did. May I ask him in future to consider this column purely in the light of a literary solo. When it is necessary to have a duet I will wait upon him, and I have no doubt that with the two of us together we shall astonish the world. It seems necessary that I should say this much to put myself right with the public, who would be puzzled, those of them who cared to read me, by the exceeding profundity of my peroration.

The reader cannot fail to have been struck, as I have

been, in reading over the various accounts which have been written of the Whalley crosses, to notice that none of the writers pretend to assert that there is anything like proof for the authenticity of the legend which associates them with the name and the work of the great missionary to the Northern Saxons, Paulinus. In the passage which I inserted in my last communication, in italics, from Abram's valuable local history, we have the tenor of all the writings which I have come across on this peculiarly interesting subject. It is all mere conjecture, hearsay, tradition : and of course no one can tell us the age of the tradition. The myth might start a hundred or two hundred years ago, or it may go further back. Perhaps the best test of the age of these interesting relics is to be found in the art features which distinguish them. All over the North of England, and almost all over Scotland, we come across the remains, in many cases very complete, of crosses which have been built—some of them in most unlikely spots—by our pious ancestors, and which were in the main no doubt devoted to religious purposes. The idea of their being of a commemorative or monumental character hardly tallies with the fact of their wide dispersion, and the multitude of their numbers. We have no means of knowing, but the probability is that in this immediate district, before the Reformation, these almost monolithic crosses might have been counted in dozens if not scores. The sites of many of them are evident to-day, and the foundations of them are, in many instances, still intact. I believe Mr. Abram has made a complete list of them in a monograph, and

has detailed their various peculiarities. Cannot we conceive that the skill that was capable of erecting such works of art would be quite equal to the construction of great churches for the purposes of divine worship? The evidence which connects these venerable remains with the sixth or seventh centuries is very faint and unreliable. There are portions—in some cases very considerable portions—of Saxon Churches remaining, as at Bishopwearmouth and Earls Barton, showing us what Saxon sculptors in stone could do with their tools, but we look in vain for anything so artistic—so technically complete—as is the sculpture, rude though it may be, upon these crosses.

Bloxam boldly takes the bull by the horns, and calls them Anglo-Norman, and it is to this period in all probability that they belong. The Saxon architects knew next to nothing of sculpture or of figure work in low relief. Their decorative effects were mainly obtained in panel work and in vertical courses of partly chiselled stone, which stood out from the main walls of rough ashlar work. Similar work to that which we find upon the Whalley Crosses, is to be met with in the tympanums of the doorways of churches in the Norman style: bold, heavy, and more or less coarse. The crosses are probably about the same date as the interesting font in Stydd Church. They simulate the devices of the Norman architects in their peculiar carvings, whilst there are no remains extant of the Saxon period with which they can be compared. One thing, however, is certain, they were constructed and completed before any portion of the present church stood upon the site.

The larger cross of the three is a very prominent object in the churchyard, and stands nearly opposite the chancel door. The upper portion does not "feature" the main stem, and is of a much later date. On a label in the centre it bears the sacred monogram in black letter I.H.S. Black letter of this character is neither Saxon nor Roman, and the carved work as well as the lettering belongs to the mediæval period. The scroll work on the crosses, where it has not been chipped off, varies in its character. A bold scroll work, being a series of spirals, is most noticeable. We find a similar feature in the Burnley remains, and in those at Ilkley. The Scotch crosses at Iona and elsewhere show it, and so do the relics of crosses in North Yorkshire, which yet remain to us. Evidently the architects and sculptors who fashioned the Whalley crosses derived their inspiration from the same source as those in Scotland and Northumbria, and the calling was not one confined to a few workmen. Another of the crosses shows panel-work, filled in with rude, and now hardly discernible figures. One is a crucifixion, rudely fashioned. Here we have a striking likeness to the rude sculpture on the font at Stydd: rough outline, and little attempt at minuter detail. There are many remains of incised crosses on slabs in the Churchyard, but these belong to a later period than the trinity of really old crosses which constitute such an antiquarian treasure in the God's Acre of Whalley.

I have made this sketch of my ramble from Great Harwood to Whalley much more exhaustive in some respects than I intended when I began the series of papers. I have dwelt

somewhat lengthily on the very interesting folk-lore of the district. Whalley Church itself might be made the subject of many papers. I felt there were one or two matters connected with the churchyard crosses that required clearing up. Antiquarian knowledge has made great strides since Dr. Whitaker's day, and he is in no way to blame if some of the guesses which he made were somewhat wide of the mark. The Cambridge Camden Society, some quarter of a century ago, did a great work in elucidating by a set plan the history of our ancient ecclesiastical monuments, and the characteristics of the various styles of architecture, and the epochs in which they flourished. Since then writers innumerable have solved such knotty points as those to which attention has been drawn in these papers. The period of the mission of Paulinus, as shown by the dates in the previous chapter, was not a very lengthy one, and he could therefore hardly have accomplished the many wonderful, almost miraculous things that are related of him. And in any event he would not be canonised immediately after his death, neither would monuments be erected to his memory until he had been finally, as our Roman friends would say, beatified. These beautiful remains have given rise to quite a crowd of speculations, and it is almost the work of an iconoclast to seek to subject them to rude critical treatment; to rob them of the mystery of myth and legend with which, in the popular mind, they are associated. The position is unassailable, however, if we say they have stood there, making note of the flight of time, for eight hundred years. Twenty-four generations of human

beings have gazed upon them, so that the law of art, which Longfellow has immortalised in song, is true of them as of the other monuments of a venerable antiquity—

Art is long, but time is fleeting.

And man is himself so much of a creator, that he can call into being shapes and forms that are apparently less evanescent than his own existence. *Ars longa, vita breva* ; but

Our hearts, though stout and brave,

Still, like muffled drums, are beating

Funeral marches to the grave,


And so for the present these papers come to an end. The year 1888 has come to its declining days, and one may know by the sobbing and the sighing of the November wind that its final period is not far off. It is not in such a time that rambles go abroad to take note of what beauty there may be by rural wayside or in monumental fane. Next year, if the editor so allows and the Fates favour, those grim sisters three—with their shears so like the editor's own implement of dread and doom—I may resume this prosy narrative, and show how elsewhere in this corner of our fair England many things are to be seen on which the mind may pleasurably dwell, and which giving a ramble the zest of contemplation, of research, and of enquiry, may make it more pleasing than it would be as a mere objectless task of physical exercise.



LANGHO PARISH ANCIENT AND MODERN.

Blackburn to Langho, 5 miles.—Langho to Billington, 2 miles.—Billington to Dinckley, 1 mile.—Dinckley to Hurst Green, $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles.—Hurst Green to Dinckley Dell, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles.—Dinckley Dell to Blackburn, 6 miles.

I.—A PEEP BACKWARD.—WADA'S REBELLION.—AN ANCIENT TUMULUS.—AN ARCHITECTURAL GEM.—HISTORIC ROMANISTS.—WHEN WAS OLD LANGHO CHURCH BUILT?

HE valley of the Ribble abounds in historic memories and remains, and is crowded so to speak with relics of the real and the mythical. It is also, thanks to its bold and commanding scenery, a place attractive equally to the tourist as to the man of letters and the historian. Its round shouldered hills, rising to majestic summits, by easy, if not by insensible gradations; its pastures of living green (for the art of arable farming seems to be altogether discarded by the husbandmen in its "happy valley"); its spreading woods, now skirting the deep declivities by the sides of the rivers,



Langho New Church.

and now clothing some bold bluff of the mountains or some pleasant eminence ; its old-time churches and homesteads ; the quaint, simple, pastoral life of its people, undisturbed by the currents and eddies of our modern movements ; its old world lore, each alike, in its turn, fascinates and charms the man of culture and refinement with an eye to nature's beauties and historic records and incidents. The Ribble Valley is an ample bound, and comprises within its borders many parishes and townships. Of these the Parish of Langho is one, the name of the township which forms it being Billington, and perhaps a few notes, sketchy and slight, but accurate as far as they go, of this pastoral locality may whet the reader's appetite for more abstruse studies in local history, or may induce him, in the search for health, to wander outward from Blackburn and study on the spot the record of such feats of broil and battle, of ancient and modern modes of life ; of parish work in our fathers days and the old times before them, as well as in the present, as we may be able to place before him. To write a complete history of Langho would be to occupy wholly several numbers of this journal, but we here attempt no such feat. It is a cameo that we would present, and not a full-sized painting of a parish history. Our main object in writing the paper is to call attention to what has been accomplished in the way of church and school building and church restoration in the parish by the present esteemed vicar, the Rev. M. Hedley, and his parishioners, whose fine new Church of St. Leonard, standing as it does by the way-side on the main road to Whalley and Clitheroe,

emphasises to the passer by in a notable way the conceptions of church dignity and order which prevail in this part of the district comprised in the Ribble watershed.

Langho has a history and it is not a brief one, and its modern chronicles, judging from the many volumes of the *Parish Magazine* which have been issued, will bear comparison with those of ancient date. And here at the risk of upsetting all received notions of historical sequence, let us note that the following is a list of the principal modern works in which the Vicar and his parishioners have been engaged :—The Vicarage house was built in 1870, the project for the erection of the new schools was started in the same year ; the new Schools were opened in September, 1874 ; the Church Cottage was built in 1877 ; the Old Church, now a Chapel-of-ease, was restored and re-opened in November, 1879 ; the New Church of St. Leonard, Langho, was consecrated in September, 1880 ; and the new organ was opened in the month of September, 1882. As soon as one enterprise was completed, therefore, another was successfully undertaken, until in a period of 12 years in this sparsely-populated (as populations go in Lancashire) rural parish, no less a sum than £10,000 was raised for Church and Educational purposes. These few dates and memoranda, put here by way of preface, will, if duly noted by the reader, serve a useful purpose when later on we begin to relate the particulars of our story at greater length and with a more fitting fulness.

And now let us take a peep backward to the days of old, and see under what conditions life subsisted here in civiliza-

tion's dawn. We begin, as in the Litany phrases, with the story of battle, murder, and sudden death. The records do not go beyond the period immediately before the close of the eighth century when all the kingdom of Northumbria was torn with the broils and bitterness and cruelty of civil war. Eardulf was king, but sat on a tottering throne. According to Abram, a rival faction had gathered head, and was prepared to test with the king the Government of the kingdom. The decisive battle was fought in Langho parish on the confines of the Ribble and around Hacking. Eardulf in 798, was compelled to take the field against his rebellious subjects, and it was on this Langho battlefield, so we are told, that he met the leaders of the rebellion, Wada and Alric (both implicated in former assaults on the throne, so that as rebels they had their hands in at the game), and fought the matter out with them by that strange logic chopping of the spear, the battle axe and the sword. Wada and Alric were no common warriors, as soldiers were reckoned in those days, for they had overcome the previous king, Ethelred, and were implicated in his deposition and death. But though the rebels had been more than a match for one king, they were not equal to contending with another, for we read "it was here," at Langho, "that the rebellion of Wada was crushed." The account of the battle in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is given:—
"A.D. 798. This year there was a great fight at Whalley (Whællæge), in the land of the Northumbrians, during Lent, on the 4th before the Nones of April; and then Alric, the son of Herbert, was slain, and many with him." Another

chronicler (we are quoting *Abram's History of Blackburn*), Simeon of Durham, not only mentions Whalley as near the place of conflict, but more closely indicates the spot. His account is as follows :—"A confederacy was made by the murderers of King Ethelred : Wada, chief in that conspiracy, with his force went against Eardulf, in a place called by the English, *Billangahoh*, near Wallalege, and on either side many were slain ; Wada, the chief, with his men, was put to flight, and King Eardulf regally achieved victory over his enemies." The name *Billangahoh*, here assigned to the place, continues Abram, may be taken to refer to the line of low hills near the Ribble Bank, between Hacking and Braddyll. The present name of *Langho*, given to the inner side of this elevated ground, apparently is a contraction of the Anglo-Saxon, *Billangahoh*. The historian of Whalley endeavoured to elucidate the position of the battle, the written record of which he found confirmed by the oral tradition of some ancient battle on the lower ground of Billington. On the right bank of the Ribble, opposite Hacking Hall, are two large tumular mounds, rising from the level ground on the inner side of the bend of the river at this point. The mounds are plainly artificial in structure, and probably monumental in intent. The tumulus nearest to the river is a prominent object, and bears the name of "Lowe." Into this mound Whitaker had some excavation made about the year 1815, but found the work heavy, and gave it up without reaching the centre of the tumulus, where the relics of sepulture should lie. Nearly forty years since (now over fifty) a discovery

apparently connected with the battle of Billangahoh, was made on the Billington side of the Ribble, in the flat ground called Brockhole Eases, near the river. Baines has a note of this disclosure :—" In the year 1836, as Thomas Hubbersty, the farmer, at Brockhole, was removing a large mound of earth in Brockhole Eases, about 500 yards from the bank of the Ribble, on the left of the road leading from the house, he discovered a kist-vaen, formed of rude stones, containing some large human bones, and the rusty remains of some spear heads of iron. The whole crumbled to dust on exposure to the air." The occupation-road from Brockhole formerly passed close by the site of the mound in the direction of the river to the ford at this place, the only one across the Ribble for some miles up and down the river. The tumulus was so completely cleared away at the time of the finding of the central kist-vaen, that no trace of it remains ; but its position has been indicated on the large ordnance map. This mound must have been smaller in bulk than the great mounds across the river opposite Hacking, or the farmer would not have undertaken to level it. If, therefore, the larger mounds be also sepulchral, and date from the same event, they may be supposed to contain more important relics than the Brockhole tumulus. This battle, by which the fate of a kingdom was decided, and in which a king was in command on one side, was no insignificant conflict ; the combatants would probably number some thousands, and the battle field might extend not only to Hacking but over the whole plain of lower Billington, on the west side of the Calder

—may, indeed, have begun on the Whalley side of that river; have attained its deadliest fierceness about Hacking; and have closed on the slope between Brockhole and Brady'll, where the fugitives of Wada's broken army would be driven in hurried flight on the ford of the Ribble. The memorial of this important battle, fought nearly eleven hundred years ago, inscribes the names of Billington and Whalley for the first time upon written English history. King Eardulf's victory hereabouts did not prevent the formation of fresh combinations against him, which brought about his overthrow and banishment eight years afterwards, in A.D. 806."

So far the local historian, whose conjectures we prefer to give as they are written down, and we merely note in passing what fearful responsibilities local forms of Government brought with them in these days. Langho, hundreds of years after this, was again the scene of battle and wreck, when, in the Parliamentary struggle, it saw the king's forces, worsted at Whalley by one Marsden, fly helter-skelter across Langho Green followed by the Roundhead musketeers and club-men in close pursuit. Happily in England these times of civil war and bitterness have passed away for ever, and that in their religious, as well as in their civil concerns, Englishmen can agree to differ.

We have no record telling us when the first Church was built in Langho parish, but arrogating to ourselves the license of the historian, we may fairly presume that the interesting perpendicular chapel now occupying the pleasing site in the centre of what was formerly Billington village green, was

not the first edifice of a Christian character that had stood there, and witnessed the triumph of the "white Christ" over the ancient Scandinavian gods—Thor, Woden, Freiga, and Balder the beautiful. It is a singular circumstance, in connection with our East Lancashire churches, that most of them, except those which are not of strictly Gothic character, and date from the Georgian times, are built in what is known as the perpendicular style of architecture, a form of building which prevailed immediately anterior to the troublous times of the Reformation. Whalley Abbey, Harwood, Langho, Mytton, Clitheroe, and Whalley Churches belong to this one period, and the fact is very suggestive, for undoubtedly there was a reason for this excessive local zeal in church building at one particular epoch. And we cannot consider that previous to this period there were no religious structures standing on the sites which the churches now occupy, for most of the places named were in extent and population of considerable importance before the close of the 15th or the beginning of the 16th centuries. Christianity by the missions of Columb, Aidin, Cuthbert, and Paulinus early acquired a foothold in the North Country, and in Yorkshire and Durham, especially in the latter county, Saxon remains are still pointed out in the extant towers of the churches of Billingham, Norton, Bishopwearmouth, and Jarrow. There are single sculptured stones in¹ Langho Old Church and in Whalley Abbey which seem to be portions of edifices of a much earlier date than the present structures, and a carved capital, much worn and mutilated, built into the wall of the porch at

Langho, seems to develop Norman characteristics, though we would refrain from speaking of the matter with any definiteness in a case in which the evidence, though not doubtful in kind, is so limited in quantity. But putting aside these recondite researches, the Old Langho Church is a little architectural gem of the first water, and we may well be grateful to the reverent hands that have preserved it to us in so complete and interesting a condition. There are many pretty shrines on the banks of the Ribble, but few which combine ecclesiastical propriety and pictorial grace so effectively as these virtues are enshrined in the little rustic fane on Langho Green.

To it we may well apply the words of Mrs. Hemans:—

The Temples of His Grace,
How beautiful they stand;
The honour of our native place,
The glory of our land.

Your historian is nothing if not conjectural, and, as we have seen in the *Pickwickian* records, there is nothing pleases him more than to discover in a very ordinary monument or inscription something very ancient and recondite. He has too profound an intellect to be moved by any superficial explanations. So he romances in a serious fashion, far more seriously, in fact, than an Old Bailey lawyer dealing with circumstantial evidence, and doing his very utmost to dovetail it together. It was said of the late Professor Owen that if you brought him the small bone of an animal he had never seen, he would be able to describe to you the whole

skeleton. Now we have been edified many a time and oft by the sermons that antiquarians have discovered in solitary carven stones, the conclusions they have drawn from dubious myths, or the translation they have put on ordinary ancient inscriptions. From one carven stone they will sketch you a whole temple : from a few capital letters they will furnish a whole chartulary, and from a simple myth furnishing not the least clue or detail they will write you a whole volume of Folk Lore. The antiquary is a man full of faith in himself, and of his learning : and in the credulity of the public. His faith is, indeed, "child-like and bland," and in other respects than Scriptural enables him many a time and oft to remove all mountains of difficulty and mystery that would well fill with dismay the mind of the ordinary searcher after truth.

The Ribble valley seems for a long time past to have been the happy hunting ground of maximising and minimising historic Romancists. If all that we read of it and hear of it were true, the Areopagus at Athens, or the Forum at Rome, have no greater record of the mysterious and the marvellous, but space will not permit us to dwell on this matter further than to say that even of this small Langho parish, were we to take up the "patter" of the local historians, and weave it into a whole, volumes might be compiled in narrating the incidents and events of which it has been the theatre. This is what the *genus* antiquary says concerning the demolition of an old house at Elkar, in which the discovery of a carven angelic figure was made

when the portions of the walls were dismantled and razed. We give the extract in full, as it appears in the pages of the *Parish Magazine* :—

“The old house at Elkar, one of the oldest in the parish, has been pulled down to make way for a new building. In the gable-end next to the road was a quaint figure, in a stone panel, of a winged saint, holding over the breast, in its hands, a shield, on which were the arms of Paslew, the last Abbott of Whalley. It was a curious specimen of antique stone carving, and has now been taken away to Dunkenhalth. Prior to its removal the Vicar had the figure photographed. The photograph is very good. An engraving will probably be made from it and inserted by Mr. Abram in his history of this neighbourhood, which is now in the press. Mr. Abram kindly informs us that there is a nearly similar sculptured stone from Whalley Abbey, in the gateway at Browsholme ; also, that early in Elizabeth’s reign, one of the Paslews, of Wiswell Hall, nephew or great-nephew of Abbot Paslew, married a daughter of Slater, of Elkar, who perhaps rebuilt the house between 1540 and 1560, and that in 1620, a John Paslew, of the same stock, was living in Billington—probably in Elkar. The house, we find, was subsequently inhabited for a century or more by the Chews, a very old Billington family. Richard Chew, who resided at Potter Ford, and was baptised at Whalley on the 10th December, 1619, moved to Elkar, and was the first Elkar branch of the Chews. His eldest son was named Richard. He was baptised in Blackburn Church, in the register of

which appears, 'Richard, son of Richard Chew, of Elkar, yeoman,' baptised July 30th, 1654. This last-named Richard succeeded his father, and is probably the Richard Chew de Elkar, who, according to an old coucher book, gave 10s., in 1684, towards the endowment of Langho Chapel. He was succeeded in his turn by a son Richard, whose son and successor was Kendall Chew, gent. Kendall Chew was married in 1736, and died in 1764. He had one son, Richard, and four daughters. Whether this Richard, son of Kendall Chew, occupied the Elkar house after his father's time we are unable to make out. About the only information respecting him is that he had, in 1773, a pew by faculty at Langho Church. The pew bears the following inscription: 'This seat by faculty J.S. Richard Chew, off Billington, 1773.' We may observe that the terms 'Yeoman' and 'Gent.,' affixed to some of the names above, denote that the Chews were a family of some estate. They were most probably the owners as well as the occupiers of the Elkar property.

"A great portion of 100 years ago the Elkar house and farm were occupied by Thomas Green, as tenant, and subsequently by his family, the last of whom was Andrew Green, his grandson, who removed to Butler Clough. The next tenant was a man named Eastwood, and after him came Greenwoods, now at the Asylum Farm. About this time, the property was purchased by Mr. Petre. Greenwoods were succeeded by John Fowler, and, on his leaving, the farm was taken by Rileys, of Chew Mill, who have held it up to the present year, two of their workmen—Roger

Sharples and William Wiggan—with their families, being the last occupants of the house.

“The shaft of a sun-dial, ornamented on one face, and bearing the initials ‘S.M.M.’ with the date ‘1685,’ formerly stood in a corner of the Elkar Fold, but was taken away to Dunkenhalth over a year ago.”

So runs the pen of the chronicler, whose account of this discovery, of the carven figure and other matters, we take from the *Langho Parish Magazine* for April, 1877. In all probability this stone angel came originally from Whalley Abbey. It does not follow that because the shield bore the arms of Paslew that they were necessarily put there as a memorial of the last Abbot. The Paslew family might, for a long time previous to this, have been benefactors of the foundation. As to the uses of the figure, it is difficult to divine. It might have been a portion of the old rood screen, or the reredos, or it might have been taken from one of the canopied niches of the building. We have seen the photograph taken on its discovery, and to our mind it would seem to be a roof corbel, carrying the timbers, in all probability, of the Abbey chancel. In any event it is an interesting remnant, and it is pleasing to know that it is being carefully preserved, though it is much to be regretted that it has been taken away from the parish.

Reverting to our description of the old church at Langho, we may here note that Abram, in his *History of Blackburn*, describes it as follows:—“The chapel is a simple nave, 62ft. by 29ft., and there is no chancel. The entrance is under an

arched porch on the south side. At the west end of the roof-ridge there is a wooden belet for one bell. Local tradition, asserting that the chapel was built of stones from the dismantled Abbey of Whalley, is supported by the appearance of the walls externally, which consist of dressed stones of large size for a building so small. Several of the stones are sculptured with figures, heraldic shields, and other devices. Above the east window are three such carved stones, the centre one appears like the ogee head of a decorated arch, and the other two bear heads of saints now much battered and disfigured. Let into the south wall are other stones with emblematic sculpture upon them. On one of these is a deeply relieved heraldic shield; and upon another, a shield beneath tracery in low relief. Another stone, with embossed shield and tracery, is seen in the west wall. The windows, of perpendicular tracery, generally resemble some yet remaining *in situ* at Whalley Abbey. In the heads of several of the windows are fragmentary portions of old coloured glass, also, perhaps, from the Abbey. The west window is of the same style as the side windows, but larger, of four lights. The window at the east end is a plain mullioned one of three lights, the centre circular-headed, and on the north side is a similar window, without tracery.

“The interior of the chapel is plain. The roof is ceiled and supported by moulded beams, the ends resting on wooden corbels. The pulpit stands against the north wall. A single aisle traverses the centre longitudinally, joining the entrance passage from the south porch. In the wall near the south-

east corner, remains the piscina, beneath a recessed and moulded pointed arch, trefoiled. The font is modern. The chapel was re-pewed in 1688, and most of the pews of that date remain, with the initials of their then occupants.

“Langho chapel appears to have been built by Sir Thomas Holcroft, Knt., purchaser of the Manor of Billington after the extinction of Whalley Abbey. The date of erection would be about 1557. Sir Thomas Holcroft, the presumed founder, died in 1558. Braddyll and Assheton, who at the same time acquired the Whalley demesne with the site and buildings of the Abbey, may have joined with Holcroft in the erection, being likewise owners of Estates in Billington. Langho chapel is first named in bequests by John Braddyl, Esq.

“This mention is made in a will dated May, 1575, in which he leaves the sum of ten shillings every year to be paid out of ‘one lease of the tithe corn of Brockhole’ to the reparation of Langall Chapel. The chapel was originally built as a chapel of ease for the use of the inhabitants of this portion of Blackburn Parish.”

So far the local historian proceeds with his description and history of the edifice. Of course, he describes the building as it was, not as it is, for since his description was written the building has undergone an entire renovation and is no longer like itself as it was left at the hands of the Braddylls and the Asshetons. As to the local tradition that the church is a remnant of the abbey, that may at once be dismissed. The “large stones” are a poor criterion. Church destroyers are not church builders. The old church

is too much in keeping in its style and the correct relation of its parts to have been a merely patchwork kind of re-edification; a bit obtained here and a bit there from the remains of an old edifice. If the carven windows were obtained from the abbey, what about the ceiled roof and the moulded beams, supported by their wooden corbels? Then, who acted as architect, and designed a building of such model proportions? The monks were the architects of the grand churches and abbeys that have come down to us since pre-Reformation times. Is it likely the monks would assist the Goths and Vandals who had destroyed their beautiful abbey to patch together a perfect little shrine in which to celebrate the mysteries of the Reformed faith? And if churchmen had no part or lot in the designing and erecting of the new structure, how is it that it is so perfect in its proportions and its ornamentation? If Langho Chapel be of post-Reformation date, it is the only religious structure in England of that period that can lay any claim to architectural merit, for there is nothing so certain as that with the downfall of the great conventual churches all knowledge of gothic architecture, in its purest forms, was lost for nearly 300 years in this country. What the Holcrofts, the Braddylls, and the Asshetons and their predecessors did for Langho Church is evident unto this day. They pewed it and appropriated a large portion of its interior for themselves and their families, and their initials remain on the carved ends of the seats to the present day. The student who wishes to note the difference between the post-Reformation


and the pre-Reformation art, cannot do better than compare the nature of the quaint carving on those seat ends with that of the solitary capital, said to have come from the Chapter House of Whalley, now doing duty as a credence table in this same old Langho Church. He cannot have a better object-lesson furnished him as to the difference of the art of the two periods.

And there is yet another criterion by which we may see that Langho Church was built in the pre-Reformation times. The Reformers made an onslaught on all images, altars, and their appurtenances, and in their iconoclastic rage they destroyed the east window at Langho, as they did also that at Mytton, and perhaps Whalley, though I am not so certain in the latter case. I am aware objections can be urged against my theory, but I shall review these in another chapter.



LANGHO PARISH, ANCIENT AND MODERN.

II.—LANGHO CHURCH A COMPLETE PERPENDICULAR STRUCTURE.
—THE WHALLEY *Debris* THEORY UNTENABLE.—THE
RESTORATION.—HOW IT WAS ACCOMPLISHED.—THE
NEW SCHOOLS AND PARSONAGE.

O far as our observations have yet gone, there are few architectural remains of the past times in the whole Ribble Valley that are so pleasing as those of Langho Chapel, and that must be our excuse for extending our remarks upon it to a length which we had not contemplated when we first began to string together our invertebrate notes on the subject. As a rural sanctuary it is a perfect gem of the first water, and we cannot sufficiently appreciate the good care and providence of those restorers who have, without damage of the old, added the new, and so completed and rendered durable so instructive a remainder of ancient ecclesiastical art.

We are bound to take upon ourselves all responsibility for the *ipse dixit* by which we have determined for ourselves the age and date of the structure. We hardly expect that our judgment will be allowed to go unquestioned. The

matter can only be settled as one of authority, and by the weight of the evidence. We have satisfactorily established our case that Langho Chapel is of pre-Reformation date, according to our own way of thinking. On such a subject we do not intend to dogmatise, and it is only fair to say that some writers, whose views have a right to carry weight on antiquarian matters, have come to conclusions very different from our own.

The historian of the Blackburn Hundred and Parish has the following hearsay evidence on the subject, which we quote from p. 448 of his carefully compiled volume :—

“Langho Church *appears* to have been built by Sir Thomas Holcroft, Knt., purchaser of the Manor of Billington after the extinction of Whalley Abbey. The date of erection would be about 1557. Sir Thomas Holcroft, the *presumed* founder, died in 1558. Braddyll and Asheton, who at the same time acquired the Whalley demesne, with the site and buildings of the Abbey, *may have* joined with Holcroft in the erection, being likewise owners of estates in Billington. Langho Chapel is first named in a bequest by John Braddyll, Esq. He, by his will, dated May, 1575, gave :—‘To the reparation of Langall Chapell ten shillings every year, to be paid out of one lease of the tithe corn of Brockhole, which lease I do give, &c., to Edward B., my son, and John B., my godson, upon this condition, that they pay out the said ten shillings yearly, at Christmas only, and see it bestowed yearly during the year in the said lease, if the said chapell so long do continue and have divine service in the same,’ etc., etc.”

The only further evidence of the Chapel having been built in post-Reformation times is furnished by the evidence of a Recusant Roman Catholic, Bartholomew Walmsley, Esq., of Dunkenhalth, who succeeded to the lordship of the manor in 1679, and who seized upon the chapel as an appanage of his possession, and set up services in it according to the usages of the Church of Rome. His claim to the ownership of the chapel was disputed by the then Vicar of Blackburn, and in a trial in the Court of Chancery in the year 1688, he made the following deposition :—"About ye 4th year of ye Reigne of Queen Mary (1556-7), Sr Thomas Holcroft became lord of ye Mannor of Billington, and soon after began to erect a Chappell on Lango Greene, within his Mannor, which he Intended for the use of yt neighbourhood, that they might heare Masse there. But it appears that the people never resorted to it, for we find that very Chappell yard was immediately let in lease to one Wood, then assigned to Osbaldeston, then to Chew, all along under the rent of 3s. 4d. constantly paid to Sir Thomas and his Assigns ever since. *It is very probable* yt ye change of religion happening before ye Chappell was finished *might prevent* Sir Thomas his intention of getting it Consecrated; the house itself has always been employed as a Court house, except by chance some seldome times a sermon was preached by one of ye predecessors of ye now Vicar of Blackburne without any obligation," etc.

Now, let us briefly examine this evidence, first notifying to the reader that all the italics in the above extracts are our own. If Sir Thomas Holcroft were the purchaser of

Billington Manor after the ~~extinction~~ of Whalley Abbey, a question we have not gone into, he would undoubtedly be a King's man and a follower of the Reformed faith. No Roman Catholic would commit the sacrilege of buying Churches and Church lands, unless with the view of their restoration to the Church to which he belonged. It is evident, therefore, that the lame contention that Holcroft built Langho Chapel in Queen Mary's time, as a "Mass house," and that he did not get it finished because of "ye change of Religion happening before" it "was finished," is a mere clumsy pretext of the most transparent kind. The chapel, when it was put there, was finished in every part, of that we may be sure, for the architectural evidence is indisputable. Walmsley's plan to claim Holcroft as a good Catholic anxious to restore the fortunes of his church by building a new shrine for its offices, was simply an attempt to throw dust in the eyes of the Court. In a time when there was a general scramble for the property of the church, history had no memory, and probably there is no century in our English history since Norman William's time in which there was more confusion as to what was of *meum* and what was of *tuum* than in the century dating from the time when bloated and bigamous Henry VIII. began his reforming designs.

However, the Vicar of Blackburn did not admit Walmsley's plea to the ownership of the chapel, and put in evidence before the court to show that "time out of minde Divine Service had been read, ministration of Sacraments

and other ceremonial Rites performed by ye Vicars of Blackburne, or their Curates, and ye said Chappel was fitted with conveniences and ornaments for Divine Service, Communion Table, plate, pulpitt, seats, and a Bell, at ye charge of ye Inhabitants of Billington and places adjacent." Upon this evidence Judge Jeffreys gave his award in favour of the vicar.

If Langho Chapel were a new edifice, only some twenty-five years old, when that good and worthy gentleman, John Braddyll, Esq., made his will, it was very thoughtful in him to leave a sum of 10s. to devote to its "reparation." The church was of some age in Braddyll's time, and undoubtedly looked ruinous, for the church robbers and destroyers of harrying Harry's time had pulled out the east window, and destroyed all the "carved work" about the altar with "axes and hammers," and had left the church therefore very delapidated in appearance, and in need of "reparation."

There is no evidence that any expert would accept fixing the date of the erection of the chapel in Holcroft's time. Therefore we conclude that it was built in the perpendicular era, which, according to Bloxam, a sober and reliable authority on such subjects, prevailed from A.D. 1475 (about the close of the reign of Edward III.) until 1539 (late in the reign of Henry VIII.) The architectural detail is all in keeping with this style, and it is in all its parts no patchwork, but a perfect and harmonious whole, the design of a skilled craftsman and of a master of his art.

But, I am reminded, the sculptured stones, portions evidently of some older edifice, which are built into the

walls, prove that the building has been erected from the *debris* of the abbey. But is there anything remarkable in this? The old architects always endeavoured to preserve portions of the old in their new structures, and to the student of ecclesiology there is nothing more characteristic of ancient art than its reverence for the past. In York Cathedral there are remnants from the time of the Cæsars and of Alfred, as well as remains of all the Gothic buildings which have existed on the site since the time of William the Conqueror. Moreover, reverence for art and for ancient architecture was not characteristic of the times immediately subsequent to the so-called Reformation.

No credence need be attached to old traditions respecting ecclesiastical buildings which by their own features so readily prove their own identity. There is hardly an old church or an old building in the country which is not the subject of some ridiculous legend. In the Ribble Valley, judging from the evidence that is daily thrust upon one, the remnants of old myths and superstitions are more extensive in their volume, and more *outré* in their character, than in any other and similar district in her Majesty's home dominions. The yokels of the valley must always have been a very credulous folk; or a folk revelling in the occult, and in "tales of mystery and the imagination."

Finally, we are prepared to maintain our theory against all comers, and if the evidence we have already furnished is not sufficient in nature and quantity, we have not yet spent all the shot in our locker; and are prepared to give

fresh data for experts to draw their conclusions from. But we imagine all those of our readers who have made Gothic architecture a real study will be more than satisfied with the facts we have already brought to light.

We may now pass on to more agreeable and less contentious matter. In his useful *Parish Magazine*, the Vicar of the Parish, the Rev. M. Hedley, has from time to time embodied such ancient and modern lore as pertains to the history of the church and place. In the number for June, 1873, he gives a selection from a lecture on the Church and Parish of Whalley, by the son of Dr. Whitaker, the historian of the district, Whitaker, of Whalley, in which the latter alludes to the fact that a former church existed on the present site of Langho Chapel, as we have already hinted. We may be permitted to make an extract. Referring to the fact that the first Christian Emperor Constantine was born at York, he says he "probably travelled from that place to Ribchester, along this old road of ours; so that it is not improbable that there was from early times, from its proximity to Ribchester, and from the increase of population consequent upon the improvement of lands on the Ribble, rescued from the old forests, by this road, *some burial ground here, and some small oratory* or building for divine worship *anterior* to local history. True it is that the 'kist-vaen' or stone coffin, which I was fortunate enough to see opened some 36 years ago was *not here*, but at Brockhall, but then its occupant was probably buried where he fell, trying to escape over the Ribble, because the coffin was composed only

of six rude stones, and was, most probably, constructed immediately after the turmoil of battle. Be this, however, as it may, a church has existed *for many generations*, probably long before this building was raised, just the same as at Whalley, where there were two, if not more, ancient buildings which have been absorbed into the present church. We know from old charters that as early as the reign of Stephen, the Manor of Billington was granted by Henry de Lasey (Lacey), Earl of Lincoln, to Hugh, son of Leofwine, whose descendants granted it in fee to the Abbey of Whalley in 1332, and from its proximity to the river Ribble, and having in it the rich Holme lands of Brock and Braddyll, and of Hacking Hall, the grant was a most acceptable boon to that grasping fraternity."

Then the historian repeats the unsupported figment that "This Langho Chapel was built with materials out of Langho Abbey, and," he proceeds, "in 1650 Mr. Churchloe, the minister, had £40 a year allowed him by the County Committee. There were then 300 families in the Chapelry, a larger number than there are at present. King James's famous declaration in favour of liberty of conscience induced 'Bartholomew Walmsley,' of 'Dunkenhalgh,' to seize upon the chapel and fit it up for the Church of Rome, and 'Mass' was actually celebrated in it in 1687-1688. On the 16th of June following, however, on the petition of Mr. Price, vicar of Blackburn, the Lord Chancellor ordered that the chapel should forthwith be delivered to him, which accordingly was done, and from this circumstance it is said that 'Mass' was

celebrated for the *last time* in Langho Chapel, of any in England at that time."

And then the historian begins to moralise in the following fashion. "The materials of this building," he says, "have witnessed some grand and wonderful sights. Those windows with rare achievements emblazoned on them have witnessed many painful scenes of destruction. Whence came they? They came from the wreck of a former and a finer building; rescued by some kind hand from the magnificent conventual Church of Whalley. From whence came that finely carved font stone at the Communion end? From the same place, it being the only remaining stone of the beautiful Chapter-House there. Have not the seats of your chapel," he asks, "seen strange faces and strange changes? The seats of 'the Billington's,' 'the Brady'll's,' 'the Asheton's,' . . . 'the Hacking's,' 'the Chew's.' The *seats* remain here, but the old owners are gone, yet they in their day took care of *them and this House of God*. The *seats* remain here but the mansions to which they belong are gone!!! The old halls and rooms once hung round with family pictures, where a generous hospitality was wont to be kept up at Christmas: the old oak tables and kists; the carved furniture; the ancient plate, adorned with heraldic achievements of many ages; where are they? They are dispersed!!! Where are the large possessions derived from the consecrated lands of Whalley Abbey? 'John Braddyll,' the bold purchaser of despoiled estates, and 'John Paslew,' last Abbott and owner of the despoiled estates, sleep quietly close together—one of

them headless—in the north aisle of Whalley Church!! Where are the mansions of ‘Brockhall’ and ‘Braddyle,’ and of ‘Portfield?’ It is true that the shell of Hacking Hall remains, and there are those rooms whose walls, according to the legends of aged people here, have heard the groans of the last captive owner, and concealed his mysterious fate.”

We would add that we are *not* responsible for the italics, the capital letters, or the punctuation in the above lengthy quotations. We have followed literally in the steps of the writer.

We have dived a little more deeply into the history of the ancient chapel of Langho than we intended when we first set out. The subject grew upon us as we proceeded, and we found there was a knotty point that wanted definitely settling before we could get upon a straight course. All obstacles are now out of our way, and we may proceed to discuss at leisure the modern history of the parish.

Referring to the *Parish Magazine* for April, 1877, we find a paragraph stating that a liberal offer had been made to restore the old church in accordance with the plan and suggestions made by Mr. Paley, Lancaster, about a year previously. The cost, which was estimated at about £500, had been generously undertaken by a gentleman residing at a distance, with the help of his sister, who had also kindly promised to contribute towards it. The names of the generous donors were not at first announced, but it subsequently transpired that they were descendants of a very old Billington family, whose benevolence to the church and

parish had extended over many generations. The offer was made under the condition that the work should be done by Mr. Paley, and under his superintendence, as it was considered that his name and reputation would be a sufficient guarantee that the building and everything of interest belonging to it would be carefully preserved and restored, and that the money to be laid out would be judiciously spent.

Amongst other things proposed to be done and mentioned by the architect in his preliminary report, was the taking down and rebuilding of the west gable and part of the side walls, and that a new stone or wood bell cot of good design be added. The vestry was also to be rebuilt, the walls, etc., generally repaired and pointed, and a new east window, with tracery of a design more in keeping with the style of the edifice, to be added. The roof and roof timbers were to be thoroughly overhauled, all the old seats were to be re-used (carefully reserving old initials and dates cut in the ends). Other repairs and alterations to flooring, windows, walls, etc., were also contemplated.

Since we began writing these papers we have had the old church humorously described to us as an example of the "crushed perpendicular." As it then was the sobriquet was by no means an unhappy one. It certainly was "crushed" by the deformities and indignities that had been heaped upon it. But it was destined to witness, like the parish itself, a day of better things.

Mr. Paley, in the report from which we have already quoted, describes the building as a rather curious and

interesting relic. He wisely proposed that the shape of the building should not be altered, as any person with half an eye to the congruities of style, could see it had been originally planned by a master mason. In his plan, therefore, he proposed to arrange the east end as a chancel, and after taking off sufficient space for the sanctuary, to place choir seats there to face each other with their backs to the side walls. The remaining space he proposed to fill with open seats on each side of the aisle facing eastward.

At a meeting held subsequently, the vicar announced to the parishioners the generous offer that had been made. He stated that the offer had first been made to repair the old building as a mortuary chapel, supplementary to the new church which was proposed to be built. He, however, did not contemplate discontinuing the services at the old church, and upon representing this view to the proposed donor, he kindly fell in with it, and expressed his determination to have the building restored in such a way as to be fitted for divine service and at a cost of about twice as much as he had originally proposed to spend. The good work was therefore at once put in hand, and in the *Parish Magazine* for October, 1879, the vicar was able to give a full account of what had been accomplished. We may almost follow literally his description of the restoration.

A fine new window copied from one still remaining nearly perfect in Whalley Abbey was placed in the eastern gable. All the repairs mentioned in the architect's report were satisfactorily effected. The new vestry was built. The

inside walls of the main building were stripped of their plaster and pointed. The windows were new leaded, diamond pattern, and filled in with tinted cathedral glass. All the pieces of old stained glass were used up and set in the tracery of the two easternmost side windows. A new and substantial stone bell turret was erected on the west gable for the reception of the old bell, which had on it the words "T. Elleray, Curate, 1756." The aisles, which were left purposely wide, as being most convenient for funerals, were laid with red tiles in squares, bordered with strips of polished flags, which run up the sides and middle and across the aisles. The floor of the sanctuary within the altar rails, which was raised two steps above the aisle, was laid with glazed tiles, similar to some very old ones which had then just been discovered in Chester Cathedral. The Communion Table was raised one step higher, and underneath it was placed the old altar slab, which had been in use in the pre-Reformation times. This slab is marked with an incised cross at each corner and one in the centre, symbolic of the five wounds of Christ, just as on the Crusader's shield—

A bloodie crosse he wore,
The deare remembrance of his dying Lorde,
For whose sweet sake that glorious badge he bore.

The old piscina retained its former position on the south wall, and opposite to it was placed, as a credence, the old carved stone which, until recently, had been used as a font, and which, on the authority of Whitaker, we are assured is the only remaining stone of the beautiful chapter house of

Whalley Abbey, and which he thought had originally been a pedestal or bracket for a statue. A good sized octagonal font of Runcorn stone was placed at the west end of the main aisle. The choir benches were all new, as well as the altar, prayer desk, and lectern, which latter serves also as a pulpit. The old baluster communion rails were re-used, and a new communion chair was placed in the sanctuary to correspond with the old one. All the old wood was used up in the new alterations, and great care and cost were expended throughout to preserve the ancient character of the fabric and fittings, and all the new work was made to sample the old as nearly as possible. The interior was arranged to suit the purposes of a mortuary chapel, for which it is often used, and the transformation effected by the restoration was altogether satisfactory and pleasing. Ordinary services are held in the church every Sunday afternoon.

A brass plate was placed in the west wall inside the fabric with an inscription upon it, recording the probable date of the erection of the edifice, the building materials used, the restoration, and date, with the name of the gentleman to whose liberality the parishioners are so much indebted. And, finally, the "old church" was re-opened on the 1st of November, 1879, with suitable services and rejoicings. The sermon in the morning was preached by the Rev. Edward Birch, M.A., Archdeacon and Vicar of Blackburn; in the afternoon by the Rev. R. A. Rawstorne, M.A., Rural Dean of Blackburn: and next day, Sunday, morning and afternoon by the Rector of Stretford, who had commenced

his first incumbency here just twenty years before. 263 people were seated in the little church in the morning, and 300 at the afternoon service. All the preachers spoke of the liberality of the benefactor, who was now known to be Mr. William Thomas Carr, of the Middle Temple, Barrister-at-law. The occasion—the very suitable Festival of All Saints—was also observed as the annual harvest festival, and the services proved in every sense satisfactory and successful. The local newspapers approved the restoration, and it was now generally conceded that old Langho Church was one of the principal architectural gems of the Ribble Valley, a small Rosslyn of the Ribble side. At the luncheon, given to over 60 invited guests, between the Saturday services, an address, which had been prepared for presentation to Mr. Carr, was read. It was in the form of an album, illuminated in red and gilt, with rich morocco binding. In the memorial, which was signed by the vicar and churchwardens in the name of the parishioners, Mr. Carr was thanked for his great liberality, and a wish was expressed that it might please Almighty God to spare his life for many years, and that he might be granted the satisfaction of seeing much benefit result from his good works to the church and parish. Mr. Carr was not able to be present at the opening services, and the address was therefore forwarded to him. In his reply he expressed his pleasure in knowing that “the work of the restoration of the church had met with the approval of the parishioners, and he trusted that Mr. Hedley might long be spared in the enjoyment of health, enabling him to labour in

his ordained sphere of usefulness with as much energy as he had displayed during his incumbency of Langho."

Thus the ravages of time and of the hands of violent and undisciplined men, who had destroyed "all the carved work thereof with axes and with hammers," Langho Old Church stood fair in its garth—God's acre—as in that pristine morning when the service of song and praise was first offered within its bounds, and when men in lowly reverence before its virgin shrine, acknowledged the Power that is above and the mystery that is beyond, and in the presence of the glorious works of the universe acknowledged also their own impotence and their own littleness.

It is interesting in this connection to return to a note in the *Parish Magazine* for October, 1875, in which the vicar deploras the condition of the old temple, and sighs for its re-edification. "The present church is in a bad condition, and a new one," says he, "is undoubtedly much required. Most of the pews were erected 200 years ago, and are uncomfortable to sit in. The wooden floor is done, having been down for about forty years. The ugly crooked beam at the west end appears to be rotten, and has given way. The west gable leans outwards, and is far out of perpendicular." (And here is a little suggestive touch of pessimism). "The church has never been at its best anything more than a very plain building, and is very incomplete, having neither tower, spire, chancel, nor aisle. There are few churches in the present day in such a condition as it is in. Go where you will, you will scarcely find such another." And again: "We

should be glad if some kind friend would be good enough to present a silver flagon to the church. The Communion plate lacks this most necessary vessel, and for want of anything better to hold the wine at the celebration of Holy Communion, *a black bottle has to be used*, which looks most unseemly on the Lord's table." Then it was literally *de profundis*, but afterwards *Laudamus*. All things come to those who wait—and work.

But even before the Langho Old Church was in process of restoration, the vicar and parishioners had other work in hand. New schools had to be provided for the parish, and a suitable site was obtained from the lord of the manor in a central position by the high road leading from Blackburn to Clitheroe. In the *Parish Magazine* for June, 1873, we find a short entry of subscriptions which had been received by the vicar towards this object. It was a day of small things, and the least donations were most thankfully received. The project was beset with difficulties, all of which were happily overcome. The new buildings were commenced, and were completed and opened on the 12th of October, 1874. The schools were opened by a religious service, in which the Bishop of the Diocese was the central figure. The buildings were declared open by Major Le Gendre N. Starkie, one of the governors, who gave a suitable address. A tea party was attended by 500 persons. The erection of the schools cost £1,244 4s., of which £561 18s. 6d. was received from subscriptions, collections, etc., £300 from Charity Commissioners by sale of consols of the old parish charity, £75 3s. 8d. from

sale of the old school house, £246 17s. 6d. from the Committee of Council on Education, and £50 from the Manchester Diocesan Board of Education. We take these figures from the balance sheet read by the Rev. M. Hedley, the vicar, at the opening meeting. In connection with the same scheme the old Master's House was purchased for the parish, and the cost of the purchase, together with the alterations and repairs which required to be made, was close upon £100. The old school-room was secured to the church and parish for the purpose of a Sunday school.

But even before the new schools had been erected Mr. Hedley had succeeded in building a new parsonage house, on a beautiful site at the south-eastern corner of his parish. Various attempts made previously to get a parsonage erected were all unsuccessful. We can trace them back for 120 years. In the six years during which he had been vicar of the parish, Mr. Hedley had raised and spent over £3,000 in buildings, exclusive of the parsonage and school, which were generously given by the then principal landowners, a good record of work considering the comparative poverty of the parish, and its sparse population.

The new school buildings are commodious and well ventilated, and are fitted with every appliance necessary to the comfort and convenience of the scholars. So thoughtful, indeed, has the provision been in this respect that the large porch is fitted up with hot water pipes, and with pegs for cloaks, coats, etc., "so that if the children get wet on their way to school in winter, their outer garments will be dry by

the time they have to return home." In a rural parish, in which the children have often to tramp considerable distances to school, we need not point out that such a provision is as thoughtful as it is humane.

With new parsonage and new schools complete and "off hand," as it were, it was now felt that a new church was required, and at a tea party held on a Saturday evening in September, 1875, we find the vicar "opening the ball" in a speech which he then made to the parishioners. "Shortly after the completion of the schools," he said, "a gentleman who had been called upon to contribute to them, kindly offered, through Mr. Backhouse, to subscribe £50 towards a new church for the parish. He had also to announce to the meeting that night the gift of a new font to the Church by a gentleman whose name he was not permitted to mention. It was ordered, and would shortly be sent down from London. It would be a very acceptable present." He "hoped they would have a new church ere long, and stated that, in addition to the £50 which had been offered towards one, he had to announce that another person was prepared to contribute £200. A new church was very much wanted, but the funds would not be easy to raise, and they could not begin a new church without a large sum of money."



LANGHO PARISH, ANCIENT AND MODERN.

III.—THE NEW CHURCH BUILT.—ITS COST.—ITS PLAN.

IN 1877 we find the new church scheme progressing so satisfactorily that the Vicar is able in his Magazine for the month of April to announce that the subscriptions have already amounted to the sum of £1,345 14s. 6d. In July in the same year, the parishioners were informed that prospective and ground plans of the proposed new church had been prepared by the architect, and had been forwarded to the Church building committee, which had already been formed. The plans met with the approval of the committee, who unanimously agreed to adopt them, and to endeavour to erect at first a portion of the entire building—sufficient to accommodate about 300 worshippers. The plans had been so arranged that the church could be enlarged according to the requirements of the population. The part proposed to be built as a commencement consisted of nave, chancel, and south aisle with organ chamber. By adding to the nave and erecting a tower at the west end, according to the design,

the building could be enlarged to accommodate about 120 more, and by the addition of a north aisle it could be still further enlarged, should the population of the parish so increase as to require it, and it would therefore, in its complete form, provide sufficient accommodation for about 600 worshippers. The architects estimated that the first part to be built would cost from £3,000 to £3,500, and the committee considered that the sum of £4,000 would probably be required to complete it, and to defray the expenses incident to the work, such as the cost of boundary fences, conveyance of the land, and architect's commission.

In November, 1877, the subscriptions had amounted to £1,497 1s. 0d., and the *Parish Magazine*, month after month, testifies to the work of the Vicar and the committee, and to the energy put forth to make the scheme a success. The subscription list, with big sums and with little—for nothing was refused, and the widow's mite was thankfully acknowledged—in November, 1879, two years and a few months from the inception of the scheme, amounted to about £3,036 12s. 5d. In the *Magazine* for October, 1879, occurs the following significant note, which we quote entire, as a fair criterion of the spirit which actuated those who were assisting in the building of the new place of worship:—

“We have received, in response to our solicitation in last month's *Magazine*, two offers of a new font. The first was from a lady in Blackburn, who was good enough to offer, about a year ago, £20 for some special object, and has now kindly assented to the sum of £25—the estimated cost of

font—being spent in the purchase of cloth for the Communion Table, or some other object. The second kind offer of font, which has gladly been accepted, is from Mrs. Coates and her family, in memory of her husband, the late Rev. John Fayres Coates, who was the respected incumbent of Langho from 1845 to 1859, when he was unfortunately accidentally killed.”

And again in December of the same year we read :—

“Mrs. Longworth is very kindly presenting the pulpit, which is now being made, and has paid over the cost, £25. Mrs. Backhouse is also kindly giving the Lectern, to cost £8 or £9, and contributing to the wool work. Mrs. Backhouse also gave all the service books and bibles. Total, £15. Mrs. Hedley is commencing a special fund for furnishing and fitting up the Communion part. She has already received £5 towards this, and a few very kind offers to do needlework for kneelers.”

Everything being in trim, the building of the first portion of the new church, as it now stands, was commenced, and in September of 1880 it was complete. The foundation stone was laid by Colonel Hargreaves (now of Whalley Abbey) on September 16th, 1878. It was consecrated on the 25th of that month by Dr. Fraser, and was opened, as all churches should be, virtually free from debt.

The weather was very favourable for the opening services. At the time appointed for the consecration about twenty clergymen, robed in surplices, went in procession from the church cottage to the church door, where they received the Bishop, who, with his chaplains, came to the front side of the

church from the vestry. All being in readiness for the ceremony, T. J. Backhouse, Esq., Churchwarden, respectfully requested his Lordship to consecrate the building, and the ceremony was then proceeded with. The following petition was also presented to his Lordship :—

“ To the Right Reverend Father in God, James, by Divine Permission, Lord Bishop of Manchester.

“ The petition of the Reverend Matthew Hedley, Clerk, M.A. (Camb.), Vicar or Incumbent of the New Vicarage and New Parish and Parish Church of St. Leonard, Langho, in the County of Lancaster, within your Lordship's Diocese of Manchester, and Thomas James Backhouse and John Smith, Churchwardens of the New Parish and Parish Church of St. Leonard, Langho aforesaid, sheweth—That, for the better accommodation and convenience of the inhabitants of the New Parish of St. Leonard, Langho (the population of which parish amounted at the last census to about one thousand two hundred souls), a New Church has been erected and built by voluntary subscriptions within the limits of the said New Parish, in a situation well adapted for the convenience of the said inhabitants.—That the said New Church has been erected upon a plot of land containing two thousand four hundred and ninety square yards, situate in the township of Billington, in the New Parish of Langho aforesaid, which has been given by Henry Petre, of Dunkenhalth, in the County of Lancaster, Esquire, and conveyed to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England, and their successors, by deed dated the

23rd of July, 1877.—That, as soon as may be after the Consecration of the said New Church, it is intended to make application to the said Ecclesiastical Commissioners for the legal substitution of the said New Church for the Old Church of St. Leonard, Langho, and for the Transfer of the Endowments belonging to the said Old Church to such New Church, and to the Vicar or Incumbent thereof, and his successors, for ever, pursuant to the provisions of the 8th and 9th Victoria, chap. 70.—That the said Old Church of St. Leonard, Langho, has been thoroughly restored and re-seated under a faculty obtained for that purpose dated the 31st day of December, 1878.—That when the said New Church shall have been consecrated, and the same duly substituted for the said Old Church, and the Endowments transferred as before mentioned, it is proposed to appropriate and use the Old Church as a Chapel of Ease to the said New Church.—That the said New Church contains 346 sittings, the whole of which are intended to be free and unappropriated for ever.—That the cost of the erection of the said New Church amounts to the sum of £4,200, or thereabouts.—That the said New Church has been finished and completed, and the same has been fitted up, adorned, and furnished with a Communion Table, Font, Pulpit, Reading Desk, and all other articles and things necessary for the performance of Divine Service therein (an Inventory or Schedule of which articles is hereunto annexed).—And the said New Church, together with the site thereof, is in every respect in a fit and proper state for consecration.

"Your Petitioners, therefore, pray that your Lordship will be pleased to set apart and separate the said New Church, together with the site thereof, from all common and profane uses whatsoever, and Consecrate and Dedicate solemnly the said New Church, together with the site thereof, to the honour and worship of Almighty God and Divine Uses according to the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England, by the name or style of St. Leonard's Church, Langho, to be in substitution for the present Church of the said New Parish of Langho aforesaid, and your Petitioners will ever pray.

"Dated this, the 21st day of September, 1880.

"MATTHEW HEDLEY, M.A.,

"Vicar of Langho.

"THOMAS JAMES BACKHOUSE,

"JOHN SMITH,

"Churchwardens of Langho."

His Lordship having stated that he had previously read the petition, and that he was quite ready to consecrate the building, Mr. John Smith, the other Churchwarden, handed to him the Church key. The doors were then opened, and his Lordship entered the Church, followed by the Clergy, and proceeded up the main aisle, chanting the 84th Psalm, led by the choir, who occupied the Chancel stalls. The Clergy having taken their places in the Chancel, the solemn service, according to the prescribed form, was proceeded with, the Bishop, Archdeacon, Rural Dean, Canon Tonge, the Rector of Stretford, and the Vicar of the Parish all

taking part in it. At the conclusion of the prayers, the Deed of Consecration was read by John Burder, Esq., the Bishop's Secretary, and was signed by the Bishop. His Lordship then kindly preached, though he was suffering from indisposition, and had wished the Archdeacon to occupy the pulpit. About eighty clergy and laity communicated, the Bishop being the celebrant.

The new church was greatly admired by all who saw it. The Bishop, at the Consecration, said it was "his ideal of what a church ought to be," and afterwards praised it very highly in several quarters. The parishioners felt they had every reason to be proud and thankful for so noble an edifice.

The following is the architects' (Messrs. Paley and Austen's) description of the building, showing what it is now, and what it will be, if at any time it should be enlarged to the extent of the complete design :—

"The church consists of a nave 24ft. wide and 57ft. long, a south aisle 10ft. wide, and a chancel 37ft. long and the same width as the nave, with an organ chamber on the south side; the choir and clergy vestries are on the north side. The west wall is a temporary one, it being intended, when the church is completed, to add 15ft. to the length of nave and aisle, and to build a western tower 26ft. square attached to the west end of the nave, and a porch in the angle of tower and aisle. At present the entrance is in the south wall of aisle. There is also provision for a future aisle on the north side. The roof of nave and chancel are of pitch

pine, covered with green slates, the nave being 43ft. from floor to ridge, and the chancel 3ft. lower. The aisle has a flat roof covered with lead. The walls are of local stone, faced outside and inside with coarse scutched work. The internal dressings are of Stourton stone. The aisles and passages are laid with polished flags, and the chancel with Godwin's tiles. The seats are of pitch pine, and the chancel seats, pulpit, lectern, and chancel fittings are of oak. The architectural style adopted is early Curvilinear. The heating is by hot water, and the lighting by paraffin oil lamps."

Altogether the new church cost nearly £5,000. This, for a rural parish, was a large amount to raise. The interior fittings, which are most complete and include organ (opened September, 1882), are included in this sum. Subscriptions large and small were received from all sorts and conditions of people residing in all parts of the country. Colonel Hargreaves gave £200 ; Mr. S. Longworth, £532 5s. ; Miss Pilling-Taylor, £600 ; Mr. James Hindle, £125 ; Sir William Cunliffe Brooks, Bart., M.P. £103 3s. ; Mr. James Thompson, £100 ; the Diocesan Church Building Society, £350 ; and the Incorporated Church Building Society, £250. A large number of smaller sums were received, including £328 18s. 2d. in sums under £5. There were altogether 900 subscribers to the main fund for the fabric of the church, and about 400 to the other funds. Many of the parishioners who could not give money gave labour, and some gave both labour and money. The whole work was undertaken as a labour of love and duty, and, as we see, was most successfully accomplished.

So Langho parish stands now well-nigh complete in its ecclesiastical equipment. We have traced its history for over one thousand years, during which there have passed away thirty generations of mankind. For four hundred years now the Old Church has dominated its present site, and arrested the wayfarer by its quiet seclusion, and the unpretending art of its fabric. So old and new blend themselves together, and so "the old order changeth" not, though the new is added thereto, "and God fulfils Himself in many ways, lest one good custom should corrupt the world."





Mynton Church

MYTTON.

To Whalley by train, thence on foot to Mytton.—Two miles by road. It is better not to trust to the fields in any but the summer season. A field-road enters near the entrance to Whalley Station, on the further side of the railway bridge from Whalley.

FROM WHALLEY TO MYTTON.—IN PRAISE OF RIVERS.—MYTTON CHURCH.—ON THE UNVEILING OF A WINDOW.

THERE is nothing on the road from Whalley to Mytton which would lead the traveller to infer that he would discover many charms of rural beauty in its fair domain. The country is flat—a low table land—enclosed, it is true, on all sides by mountains, for on the right we have Pendle, whilst behind are the heights of Whalley Nab, and, in the foreground in front, the slopes of Longridge Fell. I have now travelled it in all weathers by foot, and, after the manner of giganity, when the days have been murky with mist and when the skies have been kindly with cheery summer sunshine. I cannot say I consider the walk is very pleasing, except in that sense that all country rambles are pleasing to

the town-jaded man, who feels a sense of liberty in the wide country expanse everywhere around him, in the fresh green pastures, and in the untainted breezes, with their rich odour of freshness and health. The road—I am speaking of the highway—after you leave Whalley proper is very straight, and very level, and very long, and I cannot say that I have the eye for flat surfaces which distinguished that charming word painter of level scenery, Angus B. Reach. But you soon get over the two miles or so which intervene between Whalley and Mytton, and, arrived at the latter village, you are not long before you discover, no matter how great a stranger you may be, that you are in the presence of a “feast of fat things,” in which elements both “ancient and modern” are served up, and where sylvan scene and riverine charm blend with the historic lore of a most charming locality, satisfying alike the eye and the intellect.

At Mytton, as at Whalley, one cannot follow the chronicler step by step and page by page. We listen attentively to what the good man has to say, jot down somewhat of his discourse in our note-book for future use, and then proceed to use our own eyes and ears. Tourist-like, our first pilgrimage is to the Parish Church of St. Michael and All Angels, which stands on a picturesque mount overlooking the winding river below, and the pleasant valley which it drains and waters. For five hundred years the old Perpendicular structure has stood intact, a feature in the landscape, and for five hundred years, after an appointed order, has the service of song and praise gone up to heaven

from within its walls. Thoughts solemn and beautiful crowd upon one in such a spot, and they are none the less solemn and none the less beautiful, because as you moralise you realise how the green pastures sweep down to the silvery water there in the Ribble bed below, and how that the landscape all around is populous with a hardy and flourishing growth of timber, most of it planted long before the present generation was born. If one may dare to be vulgar and compare greater things with lesser, one might suggest that trees give a kind of *pile* and softness to a landscape, but rivers give it lustre, richness, and life. From such a vantage ground as that of Mytton church-yard, one cannot but call to mind Disraeli's chant in praise of rivers as it occurs in the opening of the fifth chapter of *Vivian Grey*, in which he apostrophises the rapid Oar, the flowing Neckar, the tranquil Maine, the impetuous Nah, and the red Moselle. Our English streams may not be so broad and deep as those rivers of a hundred leagues, flowing through terraced vine lands; but they have their own peaceful beauty, and are as well worthy of the praises of the lover of Nature and of the poet. Our English meadows are ever green and verdurous, and how much of their wealth of beauty, their fatness, do they owe to the life-sustaining waters that meander amongst them?

Mytton is in the County of York. It is when we cross the river by the bridge below the hill that we pass from the Red Rose land to that of the White Rose. Mytton Parish is located mainly, if not entirely—for I have not cared to

enquire—in the angle of land formed by the junction of the two streams of the Ribble and the Hodder. As you cross the bridge that unites the two counties, your eyes are irresistibly drawn to notice the stream, above and below. That reach in the river—calm and placid—is a common fishing resort, and in the summer time the banks are rarely without their half-dozen anglers busy plying patient Isaac Walton's avocation. Many a time have I stopped on the middle of the bridge—and how many have been like me—to note the placid surface of the stream above the bridge, and the broken rapids below. It is one of the most pleasing river views I know, and always to me charms by its being so openly expansive. Our English rivers are not like the American ones, to be addressed in the epithet "mighty," but if we may not discover in the volume of their waters a trace of infinite omnipotence, we may at least be impressed by the thought of their constant volume and flow. Men may come and men may go, but they go on for ever.

Mytton Church, like all of its architectural kindred in the Ribble valley, has, both in its interior and exterior, many features of interest. It has not yet been restored, and it has suffered little from the ravages of time, or at the hands of ignorant, though, perhaps, well-meaning men. There is a chapel on the north side, used formerly as a mortuary by the Sherburne's of Stonyhurst. This contains four tombs, with recumbent figures of knights and their ladies, the oldest being that of Sir Richard Sherburne, the founder of the residence of Stonyhurst, and his wife. Like the Vicar of Bray, this

gentleman appears to have had an elastic conscience, for he held office in no fewer than four reigns, from Henry to Elizabeth.

There are other interesting memorials of members of the same family, but it is a corrupt following of an evil example to tolerate the conversion of a church into a mausoleum, or small Valhalla of local heroes.

All the same, the monuments in Sherburne Chapel, as monuments, in white marble and alabaster, mural and recumbent, will well repay inspection, and the curious in the matter of epitaphs may spend a profitable hour in reading the lengthy inscriptions on some of the tablets. That to Sir Nicholas Sherburne, in particular, records the providence of a wise and thoughtful country squire, anxious to promote industry, and to assist his humbler neighbours in improving their fortunes. For eighteen years he fostered the industry of Jersey wool spinning in Mytton parish, until all his neighbours had learned the art, and in this way set a good example to posterity, and furnished the means of livelihood to many in a time when occupation was not so generally to be had as it is now, and when the means of migration were not within the compass of the very poor.

There are two good inns in Mytton, one on the Lancashire side of the river, and the other in the village proper, in Yorkshire. At either, the traveller can have excellent refreshment for man and beast.

As at Whalley, there are chained books here, not far removed from their original place in the chancel. The old chancel fittings and conveniences, such as piscina and sedilia,

are still intact. The rood screen is in its ancient place, and the curiously carved cover of the font bears date 1593. A label on one of the pews runs as follows :—"Johannis Holden de Chadgley ad domn suam Chadgley pertinens año dni 1628." This shows that pews as exclusive sittings were recognised in the church nearly 300 years ago. The east window has been restored, and is full of beautiful stained glass representing the ministry of St. Michael and All Angels. The roof of the church is a note-worthy feature, the joists and their couplings and carvings being in the same position as when they were first erected.

In the churchyard there are many remains of old tombstones, crosses, etc., but the most pleasing sight is the wonderful landscape which is everywhere spread around you. Our view of this fine old edifice, by Railton, is as exact as a photograph, and gives the reader a far better notion of this time-worn edifice than any which the most graphic pencil sketch could possibly afford.

ON THE UNVEILING OF A WINDOW DEDICATED TO ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS.

How oft in painted windows we admire
Saints' effigies, for our example set ;
And gazing, wonder, if in later days,
Such lovely natures gild our old world yet.
How oft in a fair history we read
Of guileless ones, who earth's rough ways have trod,
Then like a glory have passed up to heaven.
To the abode of Angels and of God.

And as we wonder, how the electric throb
Of heartfelt pride through all our nerves will thrill,
That by our kin such mighty deeds were done
To exalt the good and to put down the ill.
The great Evangelist, the holy Christ,
The virgin-martyr of the early days,
All stream in splendour in the beams of heaven,
To laud and magnify the Almighty's ways.
Sacred humanity ! In thee ! In thee !
Deep-seated lay these solemn high resolves !
And they shall cleave to thee what time the earth,
Through dark and light, around yon sun revolves.
But why should storied picture claim thine eye,
Or a fair history in volumes set ?
Around thee in the daily walks of life
Prophets, apostles—they are working yet !
The vein of good that God enclosed in man
Still yields to heaven's light its richer ore,
And to the "sacred choir invisible,"
In travail march the saints for evermore.
Not in fair vestures of the dyer's art,
Or featured as the painter's angels are,
But in their several lineaments distinct,
And as the gods in Paradise most fair.
This is the vision that we need to see,
The spiritual presence, holy, pure ;
The meek and merciful, who in our homes
Do plant their footsteps ever firm and sure.
How often when we little think of it,
We entertain good angels unawares ?
Who soothe our sorrows, bind our self-made wounds,
Uplift our burdens, and assuage our cares.




Paint
Dyke

RIBCHESTER AND STYDD.

From Blackburn to Wilpshire, by train, 3 miles.—Wilpshire to Ribchester, by road and field path, 4 miles.—Ribchester to Stydd Church, a few furlongs.

THE SCENERY *en route*.—A ROMAN STATION.—A COIN OF THE EMPEROR GRATIAN.—RIBCHESTER CHURCH.—ITS ROOD SCREEN.—THE DUTTON AND HOGHTON CHAPELS.—A BAD RESTORATION.—STYDD, THE CHURCH IN THE MEADOW.—CONCLUSION.

T is rather a long spell for an afternoon, the walk from Blackburn to Ribchester and Stydd Church and back, and yet it may easily be done by one in good health, who is not afraid of a little extra exertion, for the road going is not difficult, being mainly down hill until you reach the trough of the Ribble. The best road is by Wilpshire, to which you may take train from Blackburn Station. From the station through Salesbury reveals to you some beautiful country, and many objects of interest, but there is no time to linger on the way.

I have gone the road in all weathers, and have always enjoyed the walk. The prospect is on every hand most

varied and extensive. On fine days the heights of Longridge in front of you and across the valley, loom as posterns of bigger hills behind them, and to the north and to the east on clear winter days you may see the caps of Ingleborough and Penygant crowned with glistening snow, looking colossal and ghost-like. In between is a pastoral country fairly wooded, dotted here and there with pastoral villages, which have been asleep—for how many generations!—but whose inhabitants hope soon to hear the snort of the steam-horse, and thus to come under the influence of the transforming powers of the newer civilization.

It is the prime of summer when we make for Ribchester; the hay has not yet been reaped, but is waving heavily and richly in the fields ready for the scythe of the mower, or for the blade of the more expeditious reaping machine. A two hours' sauntering journey partly through the fields—for we left the high road at Salesbury, as in fine weather I advise you to do—brings us to Ribchester, where, if we choose, we can make study of Roman castramentation, for here we are in the very centre of an undoubted Roman camp. We have only time, however, to make a general survey of the queer old town, itself so compacted together that it looks as though it had been built within narrowing walls, and so cooped up; and then we hasten down to the river side, where we have as fine a view of a splendid stream as it is possible to obtain anywhere in England. It is placid yet flowing, with an air of power and dignity, as it sweeps along in broad volume over its pebbly bed.

We get into conversation with a cottager, who takes great interest in answering our questions. He has lived all his life in the place, and has himself found many pieces of Roman pottery-ware and some coins. He offers to show us a few broken specimens which he has saved, and we accompany him to his humble dwelling in order to inspect them. They are mere sherds of red ware, with the beautiful geometric markings of Roman pottery, and as we handle them we cannot but be impressed by the thought that more than one thousand, nay nearly two thousand years ago, these artistic bits of clay were pressed by lips that spoke love, or that could speak of valour, but which long ago have mingled with their parent dust.

Imperial Cæsar, dead and turned to clay,
May stop a hole to keep the wind away,

Nay, doubtless now does not exist in sufficient bulk to be available for even such a purpose, for by the silent but effectual chemistry of nature he is resolved into dust, nay into elementary atoms that have long ago mixed with their parent elements. The sherd of fragile pottery still remains.

I do not purpose giving an elaborate account of Roman Ribchester. Messrs. Tom Smith and the Rev. Jonathan Shortt, Vicar of Hoghton, will shortly publish a new work on the subject, which will be exhaustive. To that work I refer the minutely enquiring reader.

I may note, however, as a matter of quite recent interest, that during last winter (1888-9) a series of excavations were carried out at Ribchester with remarkable success. (I quote

from *The Antiquary* of January, 1890.) These excavations were originally suggested and urged upon Mr. Shortt by the late Mr. W. Thompson Watkins. The undertaking was persevered in, with results that amply justified the small expense incurred. In November, 1889, what will probably be the last for some time of a long series of excavations, was commenced on the western side of the Parish Church. The object of the excavation was to find the north-western gateway of the square camp. The angle of the gateway was to be seen; across the ditch was a regular platform of oak shingle. This shingle was found at a depth of seven to eight feet, and is thought to have served the purpose of solidifying the ground close to the rampart. With the exception of the shingle, no Roman curios were found this year. No doubt further explorations would secure similar valuable results, but they cannot be undertaken without money, and the antiquary is hardly any more in repute now than he was in Sir Walter Scott's time.

I have no such purpose in view as to write a history of Ribchester, and it is not incumbent upon me to enter into any detail as to the Roman occupation there; of this abundant particulars are given in Abram's *History of Blackburn*, and there is a complete list of the various Roman finds on this interesting spot. There is little above ground, visible to the eye, to show that Roman civilisation was settled here over three centuries, and that Roman soldiers occupied the site as a military station. But the very earth turns up history, and you can hardly put a spade two feet into the soil without

discovering that you are dealing with the *debris* of a civilisation that has long since passed away.

On the occasion of our visit, the Vicar, the Rev. F. J. Dickson, kindly interested himself in our enquiries, and showed us fragments of Samian ware, bronze fibulæ, coins of silver, bronze, and gold, and other interesting objects which he had collected during his residence at the vicarage, and which have been mostly dug up in the vicarage garden. Thus in March of this year (1890) he was turning over some ground to the extreme west in his garden and near the churchyard wall, preparing the soil for potato planting, when he saw something bright and glittering. He picked it up, and found it was a perfectly milled gold coin of the time of the Emperor Gratian, who flourished from 378 to 383, and who was assassinated by the members of a party headed by Maximus, who at the time was, strange to say, a general in Britain. The inscription on the obverse of the coin was as follows :—D. N. GRATIANUS, P. F. DUG. ; and on the reverse, PRINCIPIUM JUVENTUTIS, S. M. TR. This translated into English is Our Lord Gratian, Religious and Fortunate ; August, Chief of Youth. The S. M. TR., betray the mintage of the coin, *Signata Moneta Treviris*—"This money was stamped at Treviri," now Trêves. Gratian was twenty-four years old when he was murdered. Gibbon speaks of Trêves as having been a favourite residence of his.

The Roman occupation of Ribchester began 160 A.D. Some authorities place it as early as the year 79, when, according to Tacitus, Agricola conquered this part of

England. It ended about 400. Coins of almost every description have been found at Ribchester. A Roman consular coin bearing the name of Plautius Hypseus was picked up by the workmen when they were digging a sewer through the main street a few years ago. This coin dates from 54 B.C.

With respect to the gold coin which the vicar kindly presented to us for inspection, the most remarkable feature was its surface lustre. It was bright yellow gold, but it had a face polish which I do not remember ever having seen on English money. In the words of the well-known hymn, the coin was evidently composed

of bright and burnished gold.

It is not so perfectly round in shape as a modern English sovereign. In value, as to quantity of metal, it is worth about fifteen shillings, English money. Of course numismatically it has a much higher value.

The Church, dedicated to St. Wilfrid, immediately adjoins the vicarage, and is built on a level lawn-like enclosure to the west of the Roman fort. It is built upon the site of a temple dedicated to Minerva, whose position and plan has been determined by the antiquaries, and portions of the remains of which, in the shape of bases of pillars, may be seen in the vicarage garden. Like all its fellows in the Ribble valley that I have yet seen, Ribchester Church is a fairly proportioned edifice, mainly of perpendicular architecture, though here as elsewhere there are not wanting traces of the earlier styles. The chancel was

undoubtedly at one time pure Early English, of a somewhat bold and simple character, as the three tall lancets in the chancel gable testify. The chancel has been partially restored or mutilated; and so has the south aisle. Luckily the hand of the renovator was confined to what we may call surface patchings. A window inserted at the end of the south aisle is enough to give you the heartache when you compare it with the unpretentious but beautiful ancient work. The tower and roof are here, as at Mytton and Whalley, the charm of this fine old Church. Seen from the meadows, a few hundred yards away, with tree foliage to soften and embower it, the tower becomes a beautiful feature in the landscape. In an old side chapel, now a portion of the Church called the Dutton Chapel, there is a beautiful curvilinear or flamboyant window, in the east gable, upon which I thought, as I viewed it from the vicarage garden, I should like to see Mr. Herbert Railton try his sympathetic hand. The stone tracery is complete, but nearly the whole of the old glass is gone, except a piece in the upper foliation which portrays Our Lord in Glory. This Dutton Chapel has once contained an altar, and has been an edifice separate from the Church, as it has its own bell gable. It is now claimed as private property, and I am told that rent is paid for it, illegally I should imagine, but that is not for me to determine.

In the deep chancel of the Church the sedilia and piscina still remain. The chancel end has been restored, and has not been improved thereby. The pulpit, ornately carved in

panels and lines, with scroll ornaments, dates from 1636, and bears the initials C.H. These letters stand for Charles Hydle, vicar, who was deposed in the time of the Commonwealth in favour of the Independents, his place being taken by a man named Ingham from Burnley, who conformed in the year 1661, and who therefore retained the living.

A portion of the east end of the south aisle has been partitioned off, and is enclosed by carved screen work—(is it the remains of the old rood screen?). This is called the Hoghton Chapel, and goes now, so the vicar tells me, with Dutton Manor. Rent is or was paid for this so-called chapel also, to Mr. Fenton, of Dutton Manor, and the enclosure is considered to be private property. The fine old roof of the Church remains intact, and there is an inscription on one of the side beams showing that it was lowered in the perpendicular era. This roof is hardly so fine, or in such good condition as the one at Mytton.

All about Ribchester is now fine meadow land, of unusual richness. It is in pleasing contrast to the bare pastures on the slopes of the adjoining hills, on which the soil is thin and of a coarse quality. Orchards, too, abound on and near the site of the old Roman settlement, and the vicar peacefully cultivates his potatoes and his strawberries on a site which, sixteen hundred years ago, was the drill ground and fort of a great empire, which had laid its hand upon almost every portion of the then known earth.

Stydd Church is situate near Ribchester town, about three-fourths of a mile to the north, and when I saw it first it

well deserved the name I have given it of "the Church of the Meadow." It was the time of the hay harvest, and the flower-like meadow grasses, tall and bent, and waiting for the scythe of the reaper, nodded their heads in a swaying breeze close to the little church porch, as though they were making an obeisance of reverence there. Stydd chapel stands lone and solitary, for though there are farm houses near, it is easily to be seen that it was not originally built to accommodate any neighbouring hamlet or community. It was, indeed, a chapel in connection with an hostel of Knight Templars. The hostel no longer exists, but the chapel still remains.

The chapel is a very small one, much smaller than the old church at Langho, but not so small as the little oratory dedicated to St. Margaret, which stands on the top of the castle rock at Edinburgh, and which a few years ago was restored to its original uses. It is curious to note so many signs of the different styles of architecture to be found in one little building, and that a not very ornate one, like Stydd. There is a rude Norman doorway piercing the wall on the north, now blocked up. The porch is distinctly early English, whilst the lights are of this style, and of the later perpendicular. A doorway, now walled up, high up in the wall at the west end, shows a private entrance to the chapel from the adjacent hostel, long since razed to the ground. A plenteous growth of ivy drapes the gables at the west and east, and makes the building additionally picturesque; though the chaste windows, the quaint porch, and beautiful grey stone of the edifice, bedded as they are in summer time in a

dense growth of tall meadow grass, make of themselves a grouping singularly pleasing and picturesque. All the old life has gone from the temple, but it is not yet a useless ruin ; and the meadow grasses outside preach the natural gospel of a perpetual resurrection even for the frailest things of the earth.

The ancient Font of Stydd Church still remains. It is the chief feature in the Church, and forms the subject of a communication which Mr. Tom C. Smith, now busy with a *History of Ribchester*, makes to *The Antiquary* of January of the present year. It stands in the north-west corner of the Church, is octagonal in shape, and is made of dark grit stone, which gives a rough outline to the quaint sculpture in its panels. There is the usual pediment, stem, and overhanging bowl, after the Early English period. Around the latter are raised shields in panels, bearing the following sacred and heraldic monograms and devices : (1) Jesus : (2) the heart, hands, and feet of Christ ; (3) the initials T. P. or C. P. possibly intended to denote the donor, of whom many (all probably inaccurate) conjectures have been made. I venture, with diffidence, says Mr. Smith, from whom I am quoting, to suggest that it refers to the Clerkenwell Preceptory, the headquarters of the Knights Hospitallers in England ; (4) a quartrefoil, on a chief, a long cross (arms not yet identified) ; (5) a leopard's head jessant-de-lis (arms not yet identified) ; (6) lion rampant jessant-de-lis ; (7) five bulls' heads, cabossed in cross (arms not yet identified) ; (8) on a chevron between three pheons, as many mullets, the arms of Newport, of Salop.

Dr. Whitaker makes no attempt to explain any of the arms save one, which he assigns to the Knights Hospitallers. Other writers confess their inability to say to what families they belonged, although Latham deliberately asserts, without any proof whatever, "that the shields on the upper part bear the arms of the Talbot family, but no date." It is only right that I should state that antiquaries are indebted to Sir Henry Dryden for the solution of the riddle, which has puzzled so many visitors to Stydd. Drawings of the arms were submitted to him by my friend, the Rev. Jonathan Shortt, with the result that the arms of Newport were identified, and furnished the long-lost clue. In communicating the result of his labours to Mr. Shortt, Sir Henry Dryden stated that he was unable to say to what Newport the arms belonged, and curiously enough, Sir Henry added: "I have *no* doubt that the arms have *nothing* to do with the preceptory." However, Thomas Newport was Preceptor of Newland and Temple-Bruer, Receiver of the Common Treasury, made Turcopolier, nominated Grand Prior in 1501, and Baillii of Aquila by mutition in 1502. He was a member of a distinguished Shropshire family. During the siege of Rhodes, in 1522, he persisted in embarking from Dover in a violent storm, and was lost at sea with all his forces.

On the occasion of my last visit Stydd was being white-washed and cleansed throughout. Workmen were busy scouring the floor of limewash and dirt in a very primitive fashion, with a brick or large stone at the end of a pole. The little chancel, judging by the carven and lettered

slabs on the floor, seems to be a place of tombs. Quite recently a Roman Bishop has been buried there. A large, flat, white marble slab underneath one of the moveable chancel seats records in Latin the fact that a Monsignore Peters was interred there in 1789. Few people are aware of this fact, and I have not found it revealed in any history. The vicar informed me that the quaint entry of the interment in the Parish Register is simply "Petre, Esq., Papist Bishop." One cannot but ask how such a prelate came to be interred in such a place, in such a time, and with what rites.

The little grey church, square and compact, with its shingle roof and abutting porch, is, so far as the interior is concerned, unseated throughout. The plain altar is of oak, a communion table proper, with four legs carved, and has evidently been placed where it is in puritan times. The sanctuary railing, also of oak, dates from the same epoch, and the pulpit, which formerly had a sounding board, is of a piece with the rest of the internal wood-work. Nothing could be plainer, or less in keeping with the rest of the structure. The altar or communion table was, so I am told by the vicar, made by a man named Ogden in 1688.

There is a churchyard attached to Stydd, in which, doubtless, there are graves; but all are overgrown with grass, and the little plot is quite level, except near the centre, where a square stone, with a sunken hole in the middle of it, tells us plainly enough that it is the stem from which arose the customary churchyard cross.

The dedication of the church is to God and the Holy Saviour (*Deo et Sancto Salvatori*). I am pleased to know that the vicar contemplates its early and reverent restoration, from plans by Mr. Protherho, of the firm of Messrs. Middleton, Protherho and Phillott.

And so for the present our task ends. Our cursory book is written. We return to Ribchester, and note how beautiful is the country all around. The river comes in view round a turn in the landscape, and vanishes from the vision around another turn, just like life itself. There is a path by the meadows alongside the still waters, along which we stroll some four hundred yards or so to the ferry, and cross over by the Ribchester boat. The skies look loftier for the hills that are all around. How plenteous are the flowers among the wild meadow grasses ! It is a land of echo, and but call loudly, and your voice comes back to you again. How sweet the scene of country calm, after the bustle of the town ; how fresh and pure the air. Around everything there is a rapture of quiet and repose. As we ascend the further bank, we note how the filmy blue smoke slowly ascends from farmstead and cot, spiritual, ethereal. Just so ascended the curling blue mist from the fires lighted in Roman atriums, how many hundreds of years ago ?

Our walks have wended by grey walls, lichen and moss-stained, and bleached by rains and storms. We have passed lonely farm houses, from which emerged the merry noise of riant child voices, speaking of joy and happiness. In the spring meadows we have seen the weak-

legged lambs gambolling, innocent of all knowledge of the butcher's knife, beside their happy dams. We have watched the spring and summer wild flowers grow, and we have seen them die.

Nipped by the wind's untimely blast,
Scorched by the sun's directer ray.

We have "cracked" with grand-dames in road-side inns, who have confidently related to us their whole life history. We have had confidential consultations with poachers and village ne'er-do-weels, and with grave and reverend village pastors. We have passed by the side of babbling streams, over which swallows skimmed and darted; and we have noted the finny life in the rivers below, as we have gazed from a coign of vantage on some high backed bridge. We have held sweet converse with historic voices, and we have noted how the tooth of time has eaten into ruins grey with years. We have heard the melodious bell-notes steal over the still landscape from church towers about the time of evensong. We have noted the advent of the cuckoo and of the meadow crake, and we have seen the spots where daffodils grow in greatest plenty, and where hyacinths clothe the wood mounds with their sheen of mauvy-blue. We have listened to the tree whisperings in the forests, and we have heard the silver tinkle and hollow moaning of mountain streams. We have seen the stars at night gleaming from the firmament like patines of bright gold, and we have been caught by lonely hillsides in Scotch mists, and in sousing mid-summer thunder showers. And we have preferred all this to the shackled indoor town

life. Is not the reader at one with us, and prepared to rise from such an entertainment feeling that the words *Benedicite Omnia Opera* form the only thanksgiving he can offer for such a feast?



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